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HESPEROS:

OR

TRAVELS IN THE WEST

VOL. I

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VOL. I.

THE PAPER

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HESPEROS:

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TRAVELS IN THE WEST.

BY

MRS. HOUSTOUN,

AUTHOR OF "TEXAS, AND THE GULF OF MEXICO."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I

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THE PHOENIX

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1888

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HESPEROS:

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LETTER I.

LAST MOMENTS IN ENGLAND — EMBARKATION—
GALES OF WIND—PASSENGERS' ALARM—ARRIVAL
AT HALIFAX.

Steamer at Sea—October.

I HAVE no doubt when, in the weak moments of our last parting, you exacted from me a promise that from the very moment I lost sight of your 'waterproof' on the Quay of Liverpool, I would commence a 'journal' for your edification, you fancied you were making the most reasonable request in the world. *I*, however, was not blind to the exacting nature of the demand; nor have I now to take my first lesson in the difficult art of collecting one's thoughts and writing materials, while tossing and tumbling on the wide Atlantic, a thousand miles from land; and if I *do* succeed in writing a *sea-letter* in a collected form, no one will be more surprised than myself.

Our last day at the Adelphi (last days are

wretched everywhere) is fresh in my recollection ; and I have still before my mental vision the dirty noisy waiters, who *would* persist in asking us if we were ‘going across ;’ thus doing away with all the *importance* of the enterprise, and confounding the ocean with summer lakes, and river ferries, in a manner most disrespectful to the great Atlantic. Our native shores were certainly not looking their best, as the time for our adieus drew near ; and though, according to the Italian proverb, *Ad ogni ucello suo nido e bello*, I must make an exception to the rule in the case of our *nest* at Liverpool. Impossible to find any poetry or beauty in the cold shining horsehair sofa, or any sentiment in the sulky fire, and the long accumulated dirt and smoke in which the room was shrouded, I am quite certain, that however deep and sincere may be one’s regret at parting from one’s friends, and however much we may feel at having to say the last ‘good night’ (or ‘good morning,’ as the case may be,) to one’s ‘native land,’ it is always rather a relief when the carriage drives away, and the ‘thing,’ as I have heard it called, is ‘over.’ I am sure *we* all found it so, and that even you—who I can see now in my mind’s eye standing on the Quay, in the drizzling rain, and with the wet dripping from the points of your umbrella—even you, though you would be loth to confess it, were greatly relieved when you had seen ‘the last of

us,' and when the rules of conventional friendship no longer obliged you to run the chance of a rheumatic fever, by standing in a Liverpool mist, to watch our departure. But *how* long that departure was delayed, and what alarms, and trepidations, we had to undergo, while (with the fear of being too late before our eyes) we jolted towards the docks, with our feet in the straw of a Liverpool 'fly,' and a hecatomb of portmanteaus above our aching heads, we had not time, during our momentary glimpse of your friendly face, to impart to you. But was it not a miserable morning? There were no good hearty showers, but the rain came sleepily down, as if it had made up its mind never to stop again, and what with that, and the everlasting smoke, 'the first commercial city in the world' wore an aspect by no means agreeable.

We were late for the steamer—or fancied we were—which, for the moment, was very nearly as bad, so the driver was hurried on, till both himself and his goaded animals were well nigh desperate; while we, conscious that our passage-money would be forfeited if we allowed the steamer to sail without us, became dead to all feelings of compassion, both for man and beast. On we galloped in a sort of convulsive canter, with an appearance of speed, (for the reality was sadly wanting,) which must have conveyed to the mind of any intelligent spectator, an idea that we were flying from the

offended laws of our country. Breathlessly we dashed upon the quay: 'In time for the American steamer?' was our agitated question. 'Last boat gone, sir,' said an officious-looking man, of course the one present who knew the *least* of the matter. 'Mail boat going *directly*, but can't take no luggage in *her*,' said another individual, who seemed equally bent upon our discomfiture. This was a terrible, and, for the moment, a paralyzing blow—after all our trouble, our worry, and our hurry, to be foiled at last! We looked at each other, and then at our eight trunks, in blank dismay; and I am not at all sure that visions of returning the way we had come, and of spending the winter in Paris, instead of in its kindred city, New Orleans, did not flit across the disappointed minds of each. A considerable portion of our luggage was already on board, having been sent on before with our man servant, and how we were to rejoin it, was now the difficulty. *Boseton!* 'Boseton!' 'Allifax!' 'Allifax!' screamed the newspaper vendors, adding considerably to the already deafening tumult by their offers of *Times*, *Chronicle*, and *Daily News*, to read on the passage out, and causing one thereby to feel perfectly bewildered, and in a most uncomfortable state of doubt, as to whether the respectable cities above-named were *really* more than two thousand miles off, or only little cockney places within reach of a sixpenny steam-boat.

After sitting for some time in our hackney-coach, in a state bordering upon apathy, watching the falling rain, and wondering what was to happen next, a well-dressed, civil-spoken gentleman, came unexpectedly to our rescue. He did more than pity our dilemma, for he *promised* to do his best to extricate us from it; and this promise he eventually fulfilled, by contriving that we, with our bags and luggage, should by especial privilege—through him granted—be allowed a passage in the mail-steamer, to the Hibernia. After quitting the questionable comfort of our hackney-coach, we betook ourselves (at the benevolent suggestion of this friendly gentleman) to the still more equivocal shelter of a species of ‘round-house,’ built on the quay. It was a large building, open to all the winds of Heaven, and, for that matter to its rains also; for the October *breeze* whistled through this, its own particular temple, and the wet drifted in everywhere.

A few damp and forlorn people, waiting like ourselves, the arrival of the all-important mail-bags, were huddled together, showering abuse on all officials collectively, and carefully abstaining from any invective against *themselves*; though it was to their own tardiness alone, that they were indebted for being placed in so disagreeable a situation. It was an odious place altogether. There was a pungent odour of bad tobacco, and noxious

fumes were steaming up from moist pea-jackets, and drops came heavily down upon one's shoulders from the closing umbrellas. There was, however, no help for it. To venture back into the town was not to be thought of for a moment, as any attempt to better our condition, was likely to end in the wished for mail-boat escaping us altogether. We waited a long time ; so long, that we began to think the civil-spoken gentleman had voluntarily deceived us, and was, in fact, neither more nor less than some Adelphi emissary in disguise, who had adopted this ingenious method of decoying us back to the hotel. At length, an individual, bolder and more free of speech than the rest, aroused himself to meet the emergency, and, in emphatic language, 'up and spoke.' To do him only justice, I must say, that what he said was vituperative enough, and his language as *strong* as it could well be. After anathematizing what he, in true 'John Bull' parlance, called the 'humbug of the whole affair,' he offered in the most liberal manner in the world, to sacrifice himself to the general good, by rushing recklessly out into the rain to prosecute inquiries, and (as he said) make *the thing* sure. Our gratitude was of course great, but our pugnacious and impatient fellow-sufferer might have spared himself the trouble he was taking ; for no sooner was he gone than we received the joyful intelligence that the mail-bags had at length

arrived, and, with them, the time for us to embark.

Though (at the moment of bidding it 'Farewell,') we could not help our thoughts dwelling a *little* on the land we were leaving behind us, it was a joyful sight, that of the dirty little steamer lying alongside the quay, making her notes of departure audible enough, by slight puffs from her black chimney, and with her deck already crowded with bags and passengers. On we hurried with the rest, the ladies tucking up their gowns in a vain effort to keep them out of the mire, and the gentlemen shouldering their umbrellas, and jostling one another violently. There lay the heaps of huge white leather sacks, some on deck and some still on the quay, but all guarded alike by the admiralty-agent, who stood over them watching their embarkation, and with as great an air of dignified responsibility on his countenance as government functionaries always think it necessary to assume, whether they are intrusted with a *portfolio*, or have only a letter-bag for which they are accounted responsible. The trust, however, over which the mail-agent was mounting guard, was a very respectable-looking one after all, and I could not help thinking that the bags appeared large and numerous enough, to contain a letter from every full-grown inhabitant of the three kingdoms, to say nothing of those numerous correspondents of

America in the continent of Europe, who pay our little island the compliment of sending their dispatches 'via Liverpool.' I have a vague idea that the English government pays eighty thousand pounds a-year to have these precious bags conveyed across the water, and, if this be the case, they have a good right to be treated with courtesy and respect; certainly there was no want of either on the part of the lieutenant who guarded them, and who, in his naval uniform, looked a most important little personage. He was possessed of but one available eye, which however he never raised 'from the *bags* before him,' and as to 'idly gazing,' the business on hand was far too serious for that.

We all went below to escape the noise, and above all, the rain: and even the government *bag-man*—after seeing his charge in safety—joined the company below. He was not communicative—*great* officials seldom are—and for some time, not a word was uttered. It was to the weather at last, that mighty source of English colloquial intercourse, that we were indebted for a commencement of conversation. A shy-looking passenger, who seemed to consider the lieutenant as a sort of walking 'Murphy,' or speaking barometer at the least, ventured to ask him what he thought of the weather, and of our chance of having a 'good run.' What a look of contempt the little man

gave him ! ‘ Sir,’ he replied, ‘ how can I, or any man living, answer for the weather in the month of October ?’ This was true enough, and if he had extended his indignant denial of such responsibility to all the other months of the year, no one would have been surprised. Before the dirty little steamer left the quay, its gloomy cabin, where we could barely stand upright, was brightened by the light of one kind and friendly face. The face of one who had come many a mile to see us ‘ off,’ and who was only indebted for that melancholy pleasure, to the delay in our embarkation, which had made us all so angry.

A quarter of an hour brought us to the *Hibernia*, and saw us, one after another, mounting the ladder at the side of the ship. All this *you* saw also, but what you did *not* see, and what I should in vain attempt to describe, was the great and alarming selfishness, which, after we were all on board, broke out all over the vessel. Each had an eye, and a very keen one, too, to his or her particular comfort and gratification, and great was the noise, and mighty the confusion caused by the clashing of these rival interests. There were such incessant calls for the stewards, and such unremitting demands upon the time and attention of the stewardess, that it was quite wonderful how the poor people contrived to keep either their senses or their tempers. I remembered Dickens’s touching appeal to public

sympathy on the score of his sudden introduction to the narrow shelf and the unhappy etceteras of his Atlantic berth ; and, if it had not been for his graphic description, I should have pictured to myself brighter things, and been wofully disappointed by the stern reality. As it was, I really did feel in a ludicrous state of bewilderment, and sat down musingly upon my carpet-bag, wondering how existence could be endured in such a place. We were indeed ‘cabined, cribbed, confined.’ There was a little corner washing-stand, with a little glass-door above it, behind which stood a lamp, destined to be extinguished by the bedroom steward, when, at ten o’clock at night, he went his rounds with curfew-like regularity. But the grand difficulty was how to dispose of the indispensable carpet-bags and dressing-cases, so as to admit of a reasonable hope that the door might be opened sufficiently to admit of egress. This seemed, on first sight, an utter impossibility ; but by dint of coaxing the bags into flatness and turning dressing-cases on their sides, we at length succeeded in obtaining something like order. The door itself was a standing misfortune, for it had an inveterate propensity to opening, and falling violently back on the slightest provocation, swinging and banging against everything within reach, to the utter extinction of all comfort or repose. By dinner-time we were all hustled into our respective places,

the two long tables in the saloon being completely filled by the hundred passengers on board. At the head of one table presided the captain, while the little lieutenant, who had by that time (the mail-bags being in safety, and his mind comparatively at rest) subsided into a pleasant, good-natured individual, did the honours of the other.

The passengers were principally merchants returning to New Orleans for the business-season ; they were most of them English, with a sprinkling of Americans, and a few Germans. Of the ladies, one was very pretty, but she took to her bed almost immediately, and the upper-deck saw her no more till we reached Boston. Another, with at least equal pretensions to good looks, was undergoing a course of snubbing from her husband—an Englishman, *ça va sans dire*, for no other husbands in the world have the bad taste to *afficher* their domestic tragedies in public—and generally left the table, when the meal was half over, in floods of tears. Poor little woman ! Every one pities her, and I often wonder whether she will become accustomed to it, or sink under the infliction. This ill-matched pair are going to *settle* in Canada, the situation in life of all others where congeniality of soul and a happy temperament are most needed.

In all, there might be about a dozen ladies grouped round the heads of either table, drinking champagne to the success of the voyage, and look-

ing very cheerful. The first day went off quietly, for the wind had fallen, and everything was still and snug. The next day was Sunday. The weather was lovely, and after prayers, (which were read by a clergyman on board,) every one went on the hurricane deck. I never saw anything in nature look so vividly green as the Irish coast, close to which we were passing; bright as the 'first gem of the *say*' ought to be, her verdant hills stood out in bold relief against the clear autumn sky, and made us dearly love the last look of the land we were leaving.

On we sped, and during that first and last, and only calm day, every one ate and drank and enjoyed themselves. Breakfast at eight, not the usual miserable steamboat fare, horrid tea, limp toast, stale bread, and salt butter, but broiled fowls, kidneys, beefsteaks, cold ham, dried herrings, and eggs in profusion. Every two hours throughout the day, was the business of eating renewed, in some shape or other, and scarcely were the remains of one meal cleared away, when the stewards again entered in a body, laden with piles of plates, which they dashed into their respective places with a force and velocity which never failed to excite my wonder and admiration.

Monday the 4th of October, was ushered in with foul high wind, which blew till the sea was gradually lashed to mountain height, and the ship

rocked, and rose, and plunged, causing all the ladies, with but *one* exception, to quit the scene of action, and to bury themselves and their apprehensions in the solitudes of their respective berths. Sad, and weary to *them*, must have been the days of our watery pilgrimage! But there was no dullness or tedium for those in health. Up, and on deck at seven, time enough often to see the sun

Brought forth in purple, cradled in vermillion,
Baptized in molten gold, and swathed in dun;

And to remain all day and half the night in the saloon, watching the ever-changing sea, and amused at the strange variety of human life on board. Some played at chess, and others whist, for hours together, and all in perfect silence, wrapped up in their game, though often obliged to hold on with all their might to their seats, when the lurches of the ship rendered them anything but secure. The Americans kept up their national character for *liquoring*, and were, I must say, by far the most cheerful portion of the society. Their 'custom of an afternoon,' was to prepare and drink a favourite compound, which went by the name of 'brandy-cocktail.' The avowed object was to stimulate their appetites for dinner, (though for this there appeared no absolute necessity,) and as it seemed to have the desired effect, I may as well add, for the benefit of other *weak* and *delicate* individuals, that brandy-cocktail is composed of equal quan-

tities of 'Stoughton bitters' and Cognac. Under the benign influence of this pleasant compound, the Americans on board, though often somewhat noisy, were never offensively so, and when subjected to unavoidable sea-going annoyances, such as receiving the contents of their soup plates in their laps, or the candles against their noses, they only laughed the more, while some of our military countrymen looked on and frowned, in all the double distilled dulness of English exclusiveness.

The cheerful Americans, meanwhile, were nowise affected by their solemnity, and seemed perfectly contented to have all the fun and all the 'cocktail' to themselves.

The nights, I confess, were extremely tedious. It was what is called a *badish* passage, with dead lights almost always in, and head winds; while seas, heavy ones too, falling on the deck, and an incessant and tremendous noise—the mingled roaring of winds and waves, effectually drove away sleep. One of the paddles was almost always taking its ease out of the water, leaving the other to do all the work, which did not hasten our movements, and helped to cause the disappointment in the reckoning which always awaited us at noon. I shall not attempt to describe what little I saw of the *public* discomfort below. It was what it must always be, when close quarters, irritability, foolish fears, sickness, and hysterics combine together for

the general misfortune of the society assembled. But there was one stout, heavy, dark-eyed lady, (she was, I fancy, a West Indian, and had boasted high things of herself before the great leveller, sea-sickness, laid her low,) whose terrors took the strangest and most burlesque form it is possible to conceive. Among her sundry possessions was an unfortunate son of some eight years old, who shared her narrow cot, and was the unwilling victim of her fears. Her nights were usually spent in rushing desperately about the various passages, dragging along her sleepy and half-dressed child, and imploring aid and information from all she met with. On one occasion, after one of these nocturnal rambles, she returned to the ladies' cabin, where I happened to be, and fell breathless on the sofa, moaning piteously. It was two o'clock in the morning, and, to use a sailor's expression, 'blowing great guns;' a bitter wind came whistling and roaring down the companion, while the only *human* sound which reached our ears, was the voice of the captain, every now and then giving orders amidst the clamour. The poor shivering exotic, who, in the shape of a white-faced, black-eyed boy, stood stupidly amongst us, would in all probability have slept the careless heavy sleep of childhood throughout the storm; but this the anxious heart of the mother forbade. She protested that nothing should separate her from her

darling, and that he should sink into his watery grave in her arms ! So we wrapped the wretched child in a blanket, in anticipation of this melancholy event, while his loving parent reiterated her frantic cries for the captain, and her insane assurances that *the boats were being lowered*, and that, whatever happened, *she* should claim a comfortable place in the safest among them. The stewardess, who was a perfect pattern of a cheerful, courageous little woman, had enough to do to pacify the fears and modify the screams which (as the gale increased) came thick and fast from the lips of some of the ladies in her charge ; but at last, finding all her efforts unsuccessful, she sent a message to the captain to the effect that, as *she* “could do nothing” with some of the ladies, she begged he would come below for a moment. And down he came, and if he had actually possessed the power of stilling the waves, he could scarcely have received a warmer welcome. In the twinkling of an eye he was surrounded by female forms, heedless of curl-papers, and utterly regardless of the unbecomingness of a nightcap. ‘Oh, captain,’ was the universal query, ‘is there any fear?’ ‘Plenty!’ said the good-natured man, borrowing a standard joke for the occasion—‘plenty, but not the slightest danger, I assure you.’ ‘But, captain,’ persevered the stout lady, ‘I know I heard them lowering the boats.’ The captain laughed so cheerfully at the

extraordinary idea of lowering boats a thousand miles from land, in the midst of a *whole* gale of wind, that he put them all in spirits. Captains of packet ships always *do* contrive to look so cheerful : why, I cannot imagine, for their life is a very trying and laborious one while at sea, and the responsibility 'on their shoulders,' heavy and unceasing. After this, it was natural to suppose that there would have been, at least, an interval of peace ; but, *la langue des femmes est leur épée, et elles ne la laissent pas rouiller*, and, as the Creole lady was *en train*, she commenced, with all the vehemence of her sex and country, a string of abuse against each and all of her particular friends and advisers in England, for having recommended her to go to sea in such weather ; and added, viciously enough, that she only wished they could hear what she said of them.

A great deal of what passed in that memorable voyage has escaped my memory ; but not the behaviour of the emissary of the Corn-League, whose nerves were in a sadly shattered and feminine state. Often did I hear him wander up to the deck in the dead of the night, impelled by the restlessness of fear and the desire of companionship ; once even I heard him ask, as well as the chattering of his teeth would permit, whether 'any one had been down lately, to see if there was much water in the hold ?' I have often observed that sailors

rarely tolerate either questions or interference from a landsman, and never from a frightened one, when he accosts him in moments of difficulty. So the officer of the watch answered, as I had anticipated, very shortly, ‘Sir, what the d—— have you to do with the water in the hold? The deuce is in it if you haven’t enough here, without going out of your way to look for more.’ There was a good deal more than enough where they stood, and in the saloon too, for the *scuppers* were not sufficiently large to allow free escape for the *seas* that broke over us. The poor Corn-Law man wandered back to his unfortunate wife, and soothed *her* hysterical alarms as best he could. *She* did literally nothing but scream, by night as well as by day; and the ship doctor had enough to do between her and two ladies in highly interesting situations, in whom the alarm they experienced threatened to produce very serious consequences.* For their sakes, as well as my own, I often found myself echoing the Irishman’s wish, that, ‘If Britannia *did* rule the waves, he only wished, for his part, that she’d just be so kind as to rule ’em straight, anyhow!’

* The doctor informed me, that on a former voyage he had attended a lady similarly situated, on which occasion twins—female infants—being born into the world, they were baptized by the appropriate names of “Hibernia” and “Britannia,” being the name of the ship they were born in and her sister vessel.

It is a curious and an interesting sight that of an engine working its way along in the midst of a storm. To go below and watch the quiet regularity of its movements, and feel with every rise and fall of the huge piston a greater sense of security was a favourite *recreation* of many on board, myself among the number. And yet, while admiring the *composure* of the mighty machine, which, in the midst of the awful war of the elements, still keeps on its never-ending, slow, and steady motion, it is fearful to think how slight a thing would set all this wonderful machinery wrong, and throw all into confusion and danger. To an inexperienced eye, it all seems so complicated, and so amazingly difficult to manage, that I always contemplated it with mingled feelings of admiration and fear.

There was a sort of Sam Slick on board, who held forth on steam-power to a wonderful extent. He had generally round him a knot of eager listeners, attracted by their love of the marvellous, and the Athenian-like thirst after "some new thing." He lectured on many ingenious inventions of his own, particularly on one which he affirmed would enable mankind to cross the Atlantic in seven days. His name I forget, but I have no doubt it has since become famous in the great and mighty world of steam. He was one of a class of men often met with in the Northern States—shrewd, calculating, far-seeing, and unscrupulous; in short, a genuine

Yankee from top to toe. Play on board, though constantly resorted to, was neither a source of discord nor a cause of ill-breeding. The *Southerners* played high, often having as much as a thousand dollars (£200) on a rubber; but it was, apparently, only *pour passer le temps*, and not carried on as an *industrie*.

Our vessel gradually becoming lighter, owing to the consumption of food and coal, we increased in speed as we neared Halifax; which we found ourselves doing thirteen days after leaving Liverpool. No one rejoiced more at the prospect of seeing land than "the dark lady." The last night before we reached the longed-for port had been the most suffering of all to this ill-fated female, for on that occasion she had so far lost sight of the proprieties of life, as to lay violent hands on the bedroom steward, (alias the *boots*,) and to insist upon his remaining in her berth to assist her by his comforting presence through the horrors of the night; he, however, pleaded stress of business, and escaped the office. But joy beyond expression, Halifax is gained at last! I hail the welcome, though ugly, sight of its shabby houses, and hasten to close my long letter, and to promise you that the next shall be, if not *more* interesting, at least not half so long.

LETTER II.

IMPRESSIONS OF HALIFAX — INDIAN SUMMER—
PRETTY QUADROON—ARRIVAL AT BOSTON.

Boston—October.

I MUST give you as clear an account as I can of our wandering, since I despatched my letter to you from the Hibernia. I hailed the land of the 'blue noses' with proper enthusiasm ; and though the houses were wooden and rickety, the streets dirty, and the general aspect of the place poverty-stricken, it was with unfeigned joy that I pressed my feet on the solid earth once more, and heard the tread of horses, and the sound of passing wheels. Three hours only were allowed us on shore, and I believe almost every one on board took advantage of this limited allowance, and strolled about the town, or into the oyster-shops. I soon found that three hours were enough, and almost more than enough for all there was to see ; for when we landed the sun had set, and the streets were ill-lighted with oil and frightfully dirty. There was no pavement, except that of the slippery trottoir, which, like the houses, was of wood, and equally irregular and *uncomfortable*. The want of energy, perse-

verance, and intelligence visible in so many of our colonies is nowhere more remarkable than at Halifax. You see it in the wretched aspect of the shops, the poorness of the merchandize, the absence of public carriages, and in the general appearance of indolence apparent in all you meet. Certainly civilization and refinement have made little progress among the blue noses, if I may judge from the *much* that I heard of their deficiencies, and from the *little* that I saw of the place. We returned to the steamer in good time, for our close shave at Liverpool had taught us a lesson of caution. To our surprise, we found that the captain had not yet come on board, but *en revanche*, a few *choice spirits* were tossing down brimming tumblers of champagne, and drinking their own health, and that of their friends, in the most jovial manner possible. In short, not a few were gloriously drunk, and, for the time at least, uproariously happy. Everything on board ship seems to afford an excuse for pouring forth libations of some sort or other. On this occasion, these worthies had been enjoying the luxury of eating oysters by hundreds, and had returned to the ship to boast of their achievements, and make, as they said, a night of it. There was a good deal of delay in getting in the coal, but when it was all on board, the arrival of the captain shortened the

amusements of the noisy ones, who very soon grew tolerably quiet.

On we sped through the formidable bay of Fundy, of which we had heard such awful things, that we dreaded a repetition of our former scenes; but in this we were agreeably deceived, for the wind seemed to have blown itself out, tired, perhaps, of making no impression on our stout-built ship. As we left Halifax far behind us, and advanced towards Boston, cold came the breeze from the 'new country,' and colder grew our anticipations as we thought on the still more northern clime to which our steps were bound; and even Niagara rose up before us as a most bleak and dreary prospect. Still, though cold, the weather was fine, clear, dry, and bracing. We were experiencing what some of our fellow-passengers called the Indian summer, and were told for our comfort that this sort of weather generally lasted through October and part of November.

After we left Halifax, I became greatly interested in one of our companions, who, having remained, during all the early part of the voyage, closely confined to her state-room, made her appearance on deck shortly before her arrival at that place. She was very young and beautiful. Her dress was in the best possible taste, with Parisian grace lurking

in every fold of her garments. Her hair, which was rich and luxuriant, was of a golden brown and dressed in the simplest style, but glossy and neat as that of one of Sterne's 'grisettes.' There was a look almost of high breeding in her small hands, and her manner was *French* and graceful in the extreme. This fair creature entered the saloon alone, and alone she remained, for lovely as she was, no one addressed her; but on the contrary, she appeared to be purposely avoided by every one present. Even the commonest acts of civility were, in her case, neglected, and that by the very men who were generally foremost in paying *banal* attentions to the ladies who honoured the saloon by their presence. Seeing her in this deserted situation, I entered into conversation with her, and found her charming. French was evidently her native tongue, and she spoke no other; there was just enough of shyness in her manner to increase its fascination, without giving it a tinge of awkwardness, and with her vivid blush, her evident gratitude for any attention paid her, and her little playful confidences about the Parisian convent she had just left, I thought her one of the most loveable creatures I had ever seen. It will be asked by the uninitiated, and, among the rest, by you—why this fair being was set apart in the way I have described, and why she was like a *tabooed* creature, or rather a Pariah from

which men and women seemed to shrink as from an unholy thing. Dear——, it was this. Within the veins of this fair and delicate girl ran a few drops of that dark blood, which is supposed by many—I fear, indeed, by most in America—to place the individual cursed by so *hideous* an accident without the pale of social existence. It mattered not that this poor girl was fair in form and gentle and kind in nature—her mother was a Quadroon! What was it to *them* that she was accomplished, and elegant in act or thought; she had what is called coloured blood in her veins, and she was proscribed! And how little, how very little, was she herself aware of the many and deep mortifications that awaited her! Her convent friends had never reproached her for the circumstances of her birth, nor had the light and warm-hearted French girls thought less highly of the pretty Louisianian because her mother was a slave, and *she* one of a despised and miserable race. In the simplicity of her heart, she longed to reach her journey's end, to see again the mother from whom during eleven years she had been separated, and the young brothers who had been her companions in infancy. I knew how different from the future which her sanguine fancy painted, would be the stern reality, and I felt beforehand the sincerest commiseration for her lot.

She mused alone ! Nor did she question why
No friends came near her to console or cheer ;
Alone she check'd the ever-rising sigh,
Alone she shed the agonizing tear.

Once she was blest : the spring-time of her life
Was then as cloudless as a summer's day ;
Unfit to battle in the tempest's strife,
Love flung its radiance o'er her gladsome way.

Poor nameless girl ! Those joyous hours have fled ;
Gay flowers no more thy weary path adorn ;
Thou stand'st amongst thy garlands crush'd and dead,
Thy heart well nigh as withered and forlorn.

Thy gentle head in meek affliction bend ;
Glean, if thou canst, from solitude relief ;
At least 'tis something, though without a friend,
That none can mock the lonely slave-girl's grief.

Poor victim of an erring nation's curse,
Is there no pitying heart to mourn thy woes,
To feel that life can show few sorrows worse
Than those that wait thee ere thine own shall close.

Bereft of all that makes existence dear,
Thy smiles the wealthy and the gay may buy ;
Thy hidden griefs thy sole possession here,
The only hope that's left thee is to die !

It does, certainly, seem a subject for wonder (the laws at present in force in regard to the slave population being such as to render such mortifications the natural consequence of a foreign and *liberal* education) that parents can be found injudicious enough to send their daughters to pass their childhood and early youth in Europe, where the difference in habits, and in the laws of social

intercourse, so ill prepare them for what their existence must inevitably be on their return to their own country. How much better would it be were they to be accustomed from their early childhood to the evils of their moral and social condition ; and how infinitely is it to be desired that in addition to their dangerous gift of beauty, they should not be instructed in the many graces and accomplishments which a Parisian education is calculated to bestow ! I do not enlarge upon the peculiar *tastes* which such a *course of study* is liable to produce, though they are, perhaps, often productive of the greatest evils to the hapless possessor. But I cannot now dwell on this subject, though it is one which (even in persons usually unthinking) must call forth any kindly sympathies they may possess, and which to you is, as I am well aware, one of peculiar interest and moment.

Boston is in sight, and I shall, therefore, close my letter, and send you another when I have seen a little of the country and its *natives*.

LETTER III.

BOSTON — WELL-ARRANGED CUSTOM-HOUSE — INVITATION TO A NEW ENGLAND COUNTRY-HOUSE — SLOW TRAIN — NEWBURY PORT — TEMPERANCE ORDINARY — ARRIVAL AT 'INDIAN HILL.'

Boston—October.

MY last letter closed with an announcement of my first glimpse of Boston, when (for the last time, as I fondly hoped) I ascended the slippery *leaden ladder*, and hastened up to the hurricane deck. Whether it was that the sun was shining more brightly than I had seen it do for weeks, or that I looked upon Boston as the happy means of bringing our weary voyage to a conclusion, and was, therefore, inclined to look upon it with favourable eyes, I cannot say; but the effect of its first appearance was to us, at least, very pleasing. Numerous small islands are studded over the bay, and though they are bleak and barren, and many of them only fit to afford a resting-place to 'the weary bird blown o'er the deep,' yet they give variety, if not 'enchantment, to the view.'

Boston is built on a conical-shaped hill, the summit of which is crowned by the state house, with its lofty cupola, the hill itself being covered

with houses of an uniform white hue. On the right may be observed the obelisk at Charlestown, while in the foreground are seen the tall masts of the shipping, and from which hung pendant the colours of every nation, and through the intricacies of which *our* gallant vessel was soon to thread her way. While occupied with making these observations, I perceived that we were steaming slowly through a narrow channel, on either side of which forts were erected, one of which goes by the name of Fort Independence, while the other is (I think) called Fort Warren. The Americans on board, who were assembled together on the hurricane deck, looked on with no little pride and exultation on the imposing appearance of their great maritime city. On every hand, one heard loud boasts of the perfect security of the harbour, and unqualified assertions as to the utter impossibility of the 'Britishers' ever being able to make good an entry into its fastnesses. A war between the two nations is at this time so very probable an event, the Oregon dispute being at its height, that I was the less surprised at the belligerent ideas which seemed uppermost in every breast. I confess, that when I saw the extreme narrowness of the channel which formed the entrance to the harbour, and glanced at the forts on either side, I began to have some slight misgivings myself as to our chance of being able to take possession of the city if it should

be considered necessary to do so. A cheerful smile, however, which I observed on the countenance of an English engineer officer, reassured me. 'There would not be much difficulty in keeping us *out*,' said he; 'two or three old vessels loaded with stones, and sunk just about where we are now, would effectually prevent all ingress 'into Boston by sea.' It was cheering to think how easily their best harbour might be rendered useless to our enemies, in case of war. The same thing might be affirmed of, I believe, almost all the American ports.

But the loud notes of departure were now beginning; already the saloon was emptied of its guests, and the long shining tables looked like those of 'some banquet-hall deserted.' As the vessel came slowly to an anchor, every one seemed not only *ready* to depart, but in the greatest possible hurry to rush on shore. And who could wonder at their anxiety and eagerness, suffering, as most of them had done, with such intensity for fourteen days and a half! The deck was crowded with trunks, packing-cases, and carpet-bags, awaiting, each in its turn, the usually unceremonious ransacking of the custom-house officers. We fancied that, it being Sunday, there would be some delay in the passing of our baggage; but no such thing occurred, and to us, accustomed to European delays, incivilities, and extortion, it was quite astonishing to see the celerity with which the baggage of more

than a hundred passengers was disposed of. There was neither wrangling nor complaints, nor, as far as we could see, bribery or corruption. The fact was, that very few trunks were opened at all, whether from absence of suspicion or lack of time I cannot say, but so it was.

As far as we ourselves were concerned, we did not remain a day or even an hour at Boston after our disembarkation; for we were immediately hurried off by a *friend of a friend*, a sort of collateral acquaintance, not personally known to us before, to his residence, some thirty miles from the city. We were by no means sorry to have an opportunity of seeing the interior of a New-England habitation, and also of obtaining a glimpse of some portion, at least, of the state of Massachusetts. Added to this, it being Sunday, there was literally nothing to be seen or done at Boston, and we were too much pressed for time, owing to the lateness of the season, to fritter any of it away in useless delays. Our host to *be* was a keen intelligent Yankee, a good deal in the *Sam Slick* style, with a heart full of hospitality, and a face redolent of fun and humour. He had a fund of anecdote which appeared perfectly inexhaustible, and was himself frequently the hero of some of the most wondrous escapes and adventures which ever *occurred* to mortal man—to *string together*.

Having described our new companion to the best

of my ability, I must now beg you to follow us (in your lively imagination) into our hackney-coach. Behold us, then, in a huge old-fashioned-looking machine, capable of containing nine persons, trundling quietly along, and making our way over a long, narrow, wooden bridge to the *dee-pot*, as the railway stations are everywhere called! Arrived there, we found the 'cars' on the point of starting, and passengers taking their tickets and places as fast as they conveniently could. We did the same, and were soon installed in what, at first sight, appeared to be an overgrown omnibus, thickly studded with windows on either side. Our entry was made by climbing up through a door behind, and when seated, we had full leisure to look about us. There might be assembled in this human menagerie about sixty people, *gentlemen* and *ladies* of all descriptions and conditions, (for the distinctions of first and second class carriages are unknown here;) and one and all were arranged on small horsehair seats, with wooden backs, each capable of containing two very small people, and no more. These seats were placed, to use a nautical expression, *athwart ships*, instead of *fore* and *aft*, and every two people turned their backs on the two behind, and so on to the end of the carriage. Through the middle (for the seats extend along each of the bare wooden walls of the caravan) is a narrow pathway, through which every new-

comer walks to his seat, by this means (and it is no trifling advantage) avoiding the foot-treading, gown-crushing, and begging-pardon process, to which, under different arrangements, unfortunate travellers are exposed. At the *door end* of the carriage a small placard was pasted on to the woodwork, and on it was a notice to the following effect—‘Gentlemen are requested neither to smoke or spit in the carriages.’ Below this was a piece of advice, still more characteristic of the habits and manners of the country—‘Gentlemen are likewise recommended not to hang their legs or heads out of the windows while the cars are in motion.’ We did not travel fast—indeed, we were rather disappointed at the little locomotive progress made by a people who boast *that, if they were going to ride on a flash of lightning, they would delay their departure in order to put their spurs on*; nor can I think that I do the railroads injustice when I say that we never achieved more than twenty miles in the hour; but to make amends for the slowness of our progress, the noise was terrific. This is owing, I fancy, partly to the foundation of the road being of stone, and partly to the great number and the ill-fitting of the windows, which kept up an incessant rattling, and effectually prevented our hearing any of the good stories of our Yankee friend, who, however, persevered in telling them in despite of all difficulties.

On a first introduction to American railroad travelling, it is impossible not to be struck with the extreme deficiency in *state* and circumstance, visible in the whole arrangement of the affairs. In England a railroad is really somewhat imposing, with its liveried attendants, its stone-built stations, and its bells and whistles. In America there is nothing of the kind,—a little feeble *tinkling* warns you to take your seat; and, instead of a well-fed, authoritative-looking official opening the door with a bang, and calling imperatively for tickets, a spare New-Englander, with lank red hair, and clothed in a blanket coat, walks perpetually up and down the carriage, talking occasionally to its occupants, and stopping every now and then to ask for a ticket, if he does not chance to see it (an omission which is extremely rare) inserted into the band of the passenger's hat.

Notwithstanding the placard which so kindly warned us of the chance of breaking our heads, if we obtruded them through the windows, I found it quite impossible to retain *mine* within the carriage. There was, in the centre of the carriage, a stove, heated with anthracite coal; and what with that and the evident and general dislike to fresh air and water, and the universally prevalent custom of stuffing green apples (one of the staple commodities of the country) into the pockets of coats and petticoats, an atmosphere was created which only those

who have been in a similar situation have any chance of imagining.

Newbury Port, to which we were to travel by the cars, is a considerable town, about thirty-six miles from Boston. It was a dreary country through which we passed, and the land poor and stony, though in many places highly cultivated. In the neighbourhood of Boston are extensive salt marshes, the presence of which, it must be allowed, does not in any part of the world tend to give an agreeable impression of the place which they surround; the trees are also few in number, and stunted in growth, and are for the most part firs of various kinds. The suburban houses are numerous, and are, many of them, large imposing looking villas, though built chiefly of wood; by far the greater proportion, however, are small cockney affairs, pert and white, and adorned with green jalousies—in short, *des veritables maisons de perruquiers*.

As we advanced, the scenery did not improve; nothing could be less picturesque than the straggling settler's fence, or more desolate looking than the blackened stumps of the burned down trees, in the newly cleared lands. To *grub* up these stumps is one of the severest labours of the settler, one, also, which he is very apt to neglect, leaving to time and nature the task of reducing the offending objects to a level with the soil. Large granite

blocks are often to be seen rearing their heads among the scanty vegetation, and recalling to one's mind the fact that, however much the industry and untiring perseverance of man has done towards improving and cultivating the soil of New England, nature has dealt forth *her* favours with a niggardly hand. Take it as a hunting country, it would be unrivalled—immense grass fields, moderate fences, and generally level ground, form a good *ensemble* of advantages. We were told, too, that *the* great desideratum was not wanting, the foxes being in considerable numbers. They are, however, so large and strong that none of the dogs of the country have any chance with them. The farmers wage fierce war against these troublesome and predatory creatures, and they are shot in great numbers for the sake of their skins, which are here worth two dollars apiece.

Newbury Port is a remarkably clean, pretty-looking town. The houses are all freshly white-washed, and the green Venetian blinds, which, owing to the heat of the sun, were all closed, gave *them* a very bright and *riant* appearance. The town itself looked, however, as if actually deserted by its inhabitants. The 'Great Plague' might have been there, and buried every human being in one common grave, for any vestige of existence which greeted us in our walk from the *dee-pot* to the inn. Not a human being was to be seen in

the wide streets, neither were there any horses or dogs, or even the face of a Christian peeping through the window-blinds to look at the strangers. It was true it was Sunday, and Sunday is kept with great decorum and solemnity in New England, and, moreover, we had arrived during the period when divine service was being performed ; but even this circumstance seemed scarcely sufficient to account for the appalling stillness which reigned over the place.

After walking for about a quarter of an hour through this *peopled* solitude, (for we concluded, perhaps rather rashly, that there must be humans, as the Americans call them, inside the houses,) we arrived at the *hoe-tel*. It was a large, shambling, red brick building, and could boast of a time worn look, which in this country is a rare sight. The sign which swung before it, high in air, was a very amusing one ; it represented a sober, middle-aged gentleman, invested with a three-cornered hat, an English general officer's uniform, and a great look of English dignity and contempt for the rest of the world. The costume was that of the last century, and excited my curiosity so much, that I insisted on a close examination of the antiquarian treasure. With no inconsiderable difficulty I contrived to discover some nearly effaced characters, purporting that the military hero was no less a man than General Wolf himself ! After making out ' this

transient mention of a dubious name,' I raised my eyes a little higher, and lo! above the warrior's head I saw inscribed in large letters, 'Merrimac Hôtel.' I confess that I was greatly relieved at not finding the name of some blustering Yankee appended to any portrait—however rough and unsightly—of one of our greatest heroes.

On entering, we found the interior arrangements no less eccentric than the outside. Unlike any other place of the kind I had ever been in, a silence as of the grave pervaded every part of the house. I was shown by an apparently speechless woman into a large, square, venerable-looking room, through which the hot sun glared fiercely, and the accumulated dust of years came out to sport in its beams. The air was redolent of stale and pent-up tobacco smoke, and the domestic flies were thronging the windows, and indeed all parts of the room in such prodigious quantities, and hummed and buzzed so noisily in the dust and sun, that I soon found their companionship unbearable, and went out to reconnoitre. After some time, having lost my way more than once in intricate and most mysterious passages, I was fortunate enough to 'chance upon' a *help*. Not that I was either much happier or wiser than before, after my short conference with the dignified damsel I accosted, for when (knowing the impossibility of procuring a private meal) I asked her when 'ordinary'

dinner would be ready, she replied with, 'Right away, I expect.' I was as much in the dark as if she had answered my question in Hebrew. After making this oracular reply, the 'young lady' disappeared, and I was left with no other resource but to return once more to my flies,—verily their name was Legion. Had I known at that time that 'right away,' in the new and improved (?) version of our language which is current in America, signifies 'directly,' I should not have been without some hopes of being speedily summoned from my retreat; it would appear, however, that in this case my informant had spoken unadvisedly, for another half-hour went by before the welcome, though stunning sound of the gong was heard.

But how shall I describe that dinner!—how bring before you the wonders of that silent banquet; or how picture to you the entrance of the guests, who, one after another, dropped quietly into their places, with a gravity and decorum I never saw equalled; or the food itself, which even to a hungry woman, (and I *was* hungry,) was almost too fat and coarse to swallow! Not a word was spoken during the repast, and as silence is infectious, so we also naturally attuned our voices to whispers, and at last refrained from speaking altogether. The dinner consisted of very fat boiled pork, surrounded by, and adorned with Haricot beans, as infallible a Sunday dish in *New England*,

as roast beef is in *Old ditto*. There was beef, but it was greasy; and poultry, but it was tough; and the afterpiece was a pleasant wind up, in the shape of an enormous pudding, composed of Indian corn and molasses. *Squash* made its appearance in various forms; and altogether, though the food was not *recherché*, there was plenty and to spare. An attenuated, pale-faced young lady, who appeared to think, that waiting upon us at all was a great act of condescension on her part, walked slowly round the table at stated intervals, with a water-jug in her hand, from which she replenished the goblets of the guests. No one drank either wine or spirits, though some ventured to commit the excess of washing down their platefuls of fat pork, with brimming glasses of milk! I longed greatly for a glass of wine and water after the fatigues of the journey, but I felt it would never do, to take such a *strong measure* in this—the head quarters of the Temperance Society. The meal, plentiful as it was, and ample as was the justice done to its varied merits, did not take long in the discussion. No one paid his neighbour the compliment of waiting for him, but no sooner had a *gentleman* or *lady* ‘had enough,’ than he or she got up without any ceremony, and left the room. This was my first initiation into the mysteries of an American table-d’hôte, and very original I thought it, I can assure you.

‘Well, sir, I’ve chartered a carriage,’ shouted out, at last, the loud cheerful voice of our friend, as he stood at the hotel door—‘I’ve chartered a carriage, to take us all on to Indian Hill, bag and baggage.’ And there in fact *was* the carriage; a heavy lumbering thing, but drawn by two little active wiry horses, who, as we soon found, could take us along at a very fair pace. Up little hills, and down equally diminutive dales, we ambled along for rather more than an hour. The scenery improved in beauty and variety as we progressed; the granite blocks were larger and more frequent, and the trees were higher, and of thicker growth. I began even to have some faint idea of the extreme beauty of an American forest in the autumn. I saw the rich crimson of the maple, and the bright golden tints of the hiccory, mingled with the browns and lingering greens of the other children of the forest, and the brilliant sunset glowing over all:

Earth and sky one blaze of glory.

The country seemed to be very thickly populated; and, moreover, there was not a poor-looking house to be seen; all was prosperous and comfortable-looking. What a change from those early days, when the pilgrim fathers of old first ‘moored their bark on the wild New England shore!’ Still, even as then, do the ‘breaking waves dash high,’ and the ‘rocking pines of the forest roar’

to the accompaniment of the wild Atlantic gales : yet almost everything else has changed. Roads intersect the country in every direction, railway smoke shoots up among the thinned forests, and the hand of man is everywhere ! The ancestor of our new friend was one of those bold and independent spirits, who, two centuries before, had come over in the gallant 'Mayflower' to seek in this distant land 'freedom to worship God.' There, in the irregularly built, and consequently picturesque abode, which we were approaching, had the stern Puritan sojourned with his family ; and within the house were still to be seen some of the identical furniture which he had brought in the days of religious persecution from his native land. Among these interesting relics were his clock and his Bible.

LETTER IV.

THE NEW ENGLAND FARM — TRADITIONS — EXTERMINATION OF THE INDIAN TRIBES — EDUCATION IN NEW ENGLAND — COTTON MILLS AT NEW-BURY PORT.

Boston—October.

INDIAN Hill was the name of our friend's residence. It was a curious structure—a mixture of castle, farm-house, wigwam, and Swiss cottage. In the centre of the principal front was a portico, raised almost to the roof, and supported by four columns composed of the trunks of trees, from which the rugged bark had not been stripped. Round these rustic pillars twined beautiful creepers, their foliage already crimsoned by the autumn cold ; and beneath the porch stood many a rough-hewn seat and cumbrous table ; suggesting the idea that on summer evenings, the family were wont to assemble beneath its pleasant shade, when the labours of the day were over. Immediately over the porch was a large, ancient, and most respectable-looking clock, whose office it was to warn the labourer when his hour of toil was over ; and from the roof of the house, pigeons were fluttering in and out of their pretty dovecot. On our arrival, the wife of our host came out to meet us, and then

began our introduction to the truly patriarchal life of new England country-gentlemen. The remainder of the family were at 'meeting,' and it was not till some time after our arrival, that the pretty daughters of the house, and some other guests arrived. The abode contained an immense number of small rooms, which were adorned by old family pictures; and 'heir-looms' (without price to *them*, for their antiquity, and traditional interest) were thickly scattered about. For six generations, the family of our host had lived on that spot, and cultivated the ground around it as far as the eye could reach. They had fought bravely, and suffered severely in the war of independence, having been among the first to join (what *we* call) the *rebel army* at Boston. An old, and far spreading maple tree in front of the house, was pointed out as one, under which grave deliberations had been formerly held; and beneath whose sheltering branches every blanket, and every linen article belonging to the family, (the produce of long years of household labour,) had, on one memorable occasion been spread out, and willingly sacrificed to the wants of the republican soldiers.

We lost no time in bending our steps towards the summit of 'Indian Hill,' which is a high mount not far from the house. On this rising ground had an interesting scene taken place between the *first* white man and Red-Indian chief—

heretofore the lawful proprietors of the soil. *There*, had the single-minded and confiding Indian stood with his white friend, (for the puritan was *apparently* honest in all his dealings,) and had said to him, 'My white brother is just, and therefore all this land that he sees before him and behind him, and round about him on every side, shall be his; and for it he shall only pay me that which is right.' So there and then, the bargain was struck, and the puritan took possession of the red-man's land. What he gave in exchange for it does not appear, but in all probability it was nothing of greater value, than a few coins or miserable European trinkets; or possibly some of the dangerous 'Fire-water,' the abuse of which brought so many evils upon the Indian tribes. The puritan now looking upon that vast tract of country as his own, sold it in small portions to other settlers, retaining for his own use about two hundred acres only, which constitute the present 'Indian Hill' farm.

For some time the wandering Indians and the emigrants went on well together; but after a while the latter began to tyrannize over the original inhabitants, and at last proceeded to such acts of open aggression, as enraged their wild neighbours, and prompted them to retaliate by petty and constant depredations, which, as may be supposed, rendered their neighbourhood very troublesome to

the settlers. Then began the long postponed struggle for power, which ended, as such struggles have always done, in the total dispersion, and, in fact, almost entire annihilation of the original race.

From the eminence on which we were now standing, might have been seen, about two centuries ago, a prospect widely different from the present. Then the wigwams of an Indian village were scattered about; and the prospect was enlivened by dark forms going forth in the gorgeous colours of their war paint, or returning from their hunting grounds with food for their families. Where were now the descendants of those warlike tribes? Gone, as if they had never been, swept from the face of nature by the besom of civilization wielded by the unscrupulous hands of the white men. The Battle of Mistic, one but little known in the brilliant records of European butcheries, settled their fate for ever; and to the shame of the puritans it must be added, that they (despite the avowed *liberality* of their opinions) were the first to make bondsmen of their fellow-creatures whom their superior intelligence had conquered. Hundreds of captive Indians were reduced to slavery in their own land, while many of these unfortunate wretches were shipped off to Bermuda, and there condemned to a similar fate. Since these sad events took place, the experience

and industry of civilized man have contrived to render prolific, a soil naturally sterile, and in lieu of the *picturesque* idleness of the half-clad savage there is cultivated ugliness everywhere. Not an *aged* tree was to be seen, for none of those which greeted the pilgrim fathers on their arrival were left standing. I inquired why, in exterminating the primeval forests, they had not left, here and there, some 'mighty monarch' of the woods, if only as a memento of the past. The reply to my question was, that in every instance where such a thing had been attempted, the trees so left alone had gradually withered away and *died*. There is no poetry in the nature of a New-Englander, so they *tried* to persuade me that they died because their roots were short, and they had no hold of the earth; if I had said to them, that the pitiless storms of life are felt in solitude too keenly to be endured, and that like the rose in the garden, the aged tree could not 'inhabit this bleak world alone,' no one would have understood me.

The land is divided into small farms, upon each of which its individual proprietor lives, and to a certain extent flourishes. He does not often become what is called a 'moneyed man,' it is true; but every animal want is well and plentifully supplied, and his children have the advantage of an excellent and practical education, *free of cost*. This is a privilege to which both rich and poor

are equally entitled, and its advantages are duly appreciated. The little money actually *realized*, is usually invested in the cotton manufactories at Newbury Port, or Lowell. These manufactories are in a very flourishing condition, and the shareholders receive a comfortable per-centage for their money. A large family in New England is considered anything but a misfortune, or an incumbrance. The possession of healthy children is in fact a positive blessing, and they are turned to immense account almost as soon as they can walk. From their earliest infancy they learn to be of assistance to their parents; and thus they acquire, both from natural instinct and the force of example, a degree of smartness quite astonishing to our less practised senses. I have seen a little fellow of ten years old, sent off alone and at night, in a high carriage, with a pair of horses to drive, and a difficult commission to execute some thirty miles off. No one (not even his mother) seemed to think the undertaking a dangerous one, and as to the necessity of any grown-up person being sent to take care of the youthful charioteer, they would have laughed at the idea. He was the son of our host, and the *smartest* little Yankee I ever saw. It was some time before I became aware that *smart*, in Yankee-English, means *clever*; and that the term *clever* is never applied in this part of the world,

except to *good, well-meaning* people, who are rather to be pitied for being just that, and nothing more.

It is difficult to imagine a more truly primitive state of society than that which prevails in many of the country-houses in Massachusetts ; and if an almost entire absence of temptation, few wants, simple habits, and a nature eminently industrious, may be considered as conducive to happiness, this portion of the Union ought to be singularly prosperous.

Nowhere in the world is general education so much promoted and so ably conducted as it is in New England. The instruction given with so liberal a hand, is not confined to mere *secular* knowledge, for lessons of morality, and especially of religion, are, perhaps, more strictly *given* than those on any other subject. How far the seed thus sown may take effect on the *rocky* nature of Yankee character, and whether it does *ever* bring forth the fruits of honesty and good works, may be matter of doubt, so long at least as the 'wooden nutmeg' and other overreaching systems, continue in practice. I have, however, the high authority of an English divine, (who visited the country, and whose piety and excellent judgment have never been questioned,) for asserting that the New Englanders are, both as regards education and *outward* observance, pre-eminently regardful of religion—

more so, perhaps, than any other country in the world. Had I not an idea that in England there exists an opinion that the reverse of this is the fact, I should not perhaps think it necessary to mention that there is a Bible in each bed-room of every hotel in this part of America, and that they are also invariably found in the steam-boat saloons. Temperance and other religious tracts are also constantly dispersed about, which have at least the merit of reminding the company assembled of the *existence* of the virtues which they recommend to their notice.

I have stated in a former work, how rapidly the United States were improving in the manufacture of cotton and woollen goods, and how highly probable it appeared, that in a very few years they would be enabled to rival us in the sources of wealth which England has hitherto almost monopolized.

I find that there are in the northern and central states of the Union more than thirteen hundred cotton manufactories, with a capital employed, amounting to about fifty millions of dollars. There are nearly fifteen hundred woollen manufactories, in which a capital of sixteen millions is invested, and these two branches of industry alone find occupation for a hundred thousand human beings.

It had been our original intention to devote one day, before our return to Boston, to a visit to Lowell; but we gave up our project on making the

discovery that there are several manufactories at Newbury Port, which are conducted on precisely the same principle as those at Lowell, and only differ from the latter by being more extensive, and by their being worked by *steam*; whereas the motive-power at Lowell is the Mérrimac river.

Our host was interested in several of these manufactories, which made us consider him a very useful and proper *cicerone*; so, one morning, we started on our 'voyage of inspection,' immediately after breakfast, in order that we might have the benefit of a long day at the mills. The one we first visited was an enormous building of five or six stories, and in which about twelve hundred people were employed. We first inspected the steam-engine on the ground-floor, and were afterwards conducted through the different *flats* or *stories* in succession; we were attended in our progress by one of the directors, who explained to us the process of manufacturing cotton in all its various stages. Everything we saw filled us with admiration; the arrangements were in each department so excellent, and the good order and cleanliness of everything and everybody most remarkable. But what appeared to me to be the most striking peculiarity in these mills was the air of respectability (I might almost coin the word, and call it *ladylikeness*) observable in the female operatives. There were several hundred women and girls em-

ployed in this factory, and I was assured that the moral character of each was subjected to the strictest investigation before they were engaged. The dress, appearance, and manners of these females are very much on a par with those of the 'young ladies' in a milliner's shop in London; but we were told, that so high was the standard of character among the factory girls, and so elevated their tone of feeling, that any one among them who was suspected of lightness of conduct was shunned by the rest, and was, in most cases, expelled from the factory. I have seldom seen so many pretty girls collected together as at the Newbury Port Mills, and they all looked *as* healthy as Americans usually do—which, perhaps, is not saying much.

From the women to the children is a natural transition, and I am happy to say that very few of tender years are employed in the manufactories. It is with great respect that I quote the following from a work I have met with here. 'By a statute of the commonwealth, it is provided that no person *under the age of fifteen years* shall be suffered to work more than nine months of any year in a manufacturing establishment, the remaining three months to be passed at school.' This rule is strictly enforced, and before a child can be admitted into a mill, a certificate is required, signed by a justice of the peace, that the terms of the statute

have been faithfully complied with. On the whole, the system pursued in these factories seems to be a most admirable one, and I cannot help thinking, that if a similar system could be followed in England, the most beneficial results would be obtained.

Nearly all the manufactories we saw were worked by companies, and almost every one employed in them had one or more shares in the concern; the value of each share being fifty dollars. It is against the regulations of the company for any one person to have more than a certain number of shares; I forget how many are allowed, but the amount was very small. The object of the company is, of course, to induce the operatives to become shareholders, and the advantages of this proceeding is manifest, there being necessarily a much greater degree of interest felt by those whose capital, however small, is embarked in the concern, than by the mere human machines, who, in England, swell the already colossal fortunes of our wealthy manufacturers.*

The *young ladies* employed in these manufactories are generally the daughters of respectable

* Our operatives at home (if even they could by hard labour contrive to lay by a small sum) have no opportunity of investing their savings in the particular branch of industry in which they are themselves actively employed, and which they consequently *understand* better than they do any other.

farmers or storekeepers, and, as I said before, are remarkable both for their good looks and their pleasing deportment. The wages they earn are never less than three dollars a week, and in many cases they realize more than double that sum : the expense of their board and lodging is a dollar and a half a week. By these details you will see that, by prudence and economy, a sum sufficient to purchase a share is soon laid by. A great deal has been said of the learning and accomplishments of the factory girls ; of these I can give no opinion, beyond that afforded by the perusal of some numbers of a periodical written solely by the factory girls, the title of which is the ‘ Lowell Offering.’ Many of the contributions have certainly great merit, and I understand that Mr. Knight, the London publisher, has reprinted some of the best among them.

I cannot feel myself justified in taking leave of Newbury Port without making honourable mention of it as the birth-place of the far-famed ‘ Siamese Twins.’ These *gentlemen* are now settled as respectable *husbands* and *fathers* in a more southern state of the Union.

LETTER V.

RETURN TO BOSTON—BUNKER'S HILL—THE MONUMENT—FANEUIL HALL—VIEW FROM THE STATE HOUSE.

Boston—October.

AT length, I can sit down, if not quietly, at least contentedly, and tell you a little about Boston. We spent three days with our hospitable entertainers, and then “took the cars” (the favourite term here) for Boston, at which city we arrived late in the evening. The Tremont is *the* hotel, *par excellence*, of the place, and it is one of those gigantic buildings which seem capable of affording accommodation for a small army. On this occasion, however, it was crowded to overflowing, and not a room of any description could be obtained. The Pavilion Hotel is the next in importance, and we were told we should find it very nearly as good as the far-famed ‘Tremont’ in every respect. It was, however, neither clean nor comfortable, but we were obliged in the absence of any alternative to submit.

The ‘Indian summer’ was decidedly a cold one—so cold, that we should have been most thankful to the ‘Irish gentleman,’ who condescended to come

up one time in twenty that we rang the bell, if he could have induced the little fire that was smouldering in the stove to burn with anything like spirit. After many attempts, we gave it up as a hopeless case, both man and fire appearing to have a sulky, independent will of their own, from which we could extract no warmth of any kind. The next day, (to use the mercantile language of the country,) we chartered a carriage, a very comfortable one, though it *was* all glass and red leather, like a well-lined lantern, and set out on the necessary business of sight-seeing.

We began with 'Bunker's Hill,' partly in obedience to the wishes of our driver, who seemed to think that nothing would give the strangers so much pleasure as to witness the scene of their first dearly-bought victory. The Yankees, notwithstanding their repulse, still flatter themselves that in this hard-fought battle they 'had the best of it;' and the fact of the loss on their side having been only four hundred and fifty, while that of the British troops amounted to no less than one thousand and fifty, would give some colouring to the idea. Certainly, our military expeditions in America have not answered, for a strange and wretched fatality, in almost every instance, has attended them. Even our Peninsular troops, with their hard-earned laurels still fresh on their brows, were not (though they had so lately 'struck the lion down'

more successful than their countrymen had been in America forty years before. This can only be accounted for by the entirely different system of tactics required, and by the admirable qualifications of the Americans and their country for Guerilla warfare. Had it been (as with the Chinese) our custom to put our unsuccessful generals to death, we should have had fewer generals, but I doubt whether our troops would have been more victorious.

Bunker's Hill, where the battle was fought, is immediately in the rear of Charlestown. It is situated a mile north of Boston, and is connected with it by two wooden bridges four or five hundred feet long. The monument which has been erected in commemoration of the battle is built on the summit of Bunker's Hill, in a commanding position, and has altogether a very good effect. It is an obelisk of granite, two hundred feet in height, and in the interior is a flight of stairs by which you ascend to the summit. It is entirely without ornament of any kind, and in its unpretending simplicity is worthy of the cause, for which the heroes it commemorates fought and suffered; and we, too, travellers from that distant land, whose encroachments on colonial right gave rise to so many disasters, could sympathize with the feelings of the oppressed, and feel that their cause was a just one. Do not call me either unpatriotic or demo-

cratic: England *was* unjust and grasping, and the mighty power of the *people* made itself felt at last.

Not many days before our visit, while digging a well in the vicinity of the monument, some workmen had found a few trifling relics, which must have been buried there at the time of the engagement. There were a few officers' buttons, on which we with difficulty traced that they had belonged to the 43rd and 47th regiments, and some pieces of broken shells on which the *broad arrow* was apparent. Had these things been for *sale*, I might have been doubtful of their origin, and set them down as of recent manufacture, notwithstanding that they bore in their battered appearance evident marks of the conflict. Near some remains of British accoutrements was found the almost entire skeleton of an English soldier. The hair was perfect when the bones were first discovered, but it fell into dust when exposed to the air. I looked at these sad remains with a sort of melancholy respect. Doubtless, years before, the death of this slaughtered soldier had made a 'ghastly gap' in 'his own kind and kindred;' and now, what remained but a few dust-covered bones handed about for the inspection of the curious! The man who showed us the relics did it with something approaching to veneration in his manner; and as to boasting! there was not a sign of it; on the contrary, he showed great delicacy and consideration

for our feelings, which (as the fact of his countrymen having won the battle formed evidently a portion of his creed) spoke greatly in his favour.

Boston, take it altogether, must be, I think, one of the most interesting cities in the Union. It is certainly dull to a degree of which few people can form an idea; but it has *some* historical associations, and these, from their rarity, are valuable in America. Faneuil Hall is a 'great place,' full of wooden-looking portraits of 'stern republicans,' and 'uncompromising puritans,' who, by their joint efforts, brought about the independence of 'the greatest country in the world.' One is expected to admire both the market-place and the state-house; the situation of the latter is admirably chosen, being on the very summit of the hill on which Boston is built; it is a fine building, and has a dome copied from that of St. Paul's Cathedral. From the top, there is an excellent panoramic view of Boston and the surrounding country. It is from thence easy to see that the town is built on a peninsula in this fine bay, (the bay of Massachusetts,) and that, radiating from it in every direction, are narrow wooden bridges, several hundred yards in length, the whole thing having very much the appearance of a huge spider with outstretched legs. These bridges connect the city with the mainland, and also with East Boston, which is built on an island in the harbour. As I

told you before, the bay is dotted over with islands, which diversify it as much as the innumerable white houses do the surrounding country; both together form a charming coup-d'œil, and one which (were I a resident in Boston) would make me often climb to the summit of the state-house.

The most aristocratic part of the city is called the *common*—rather a misnomer, as around it sojourn a society approaching, perhaps, nearer to exclusiveness than any in the Union. We shall not spend sufficient time in Boston to enter much into its society, but the little I see of the people leads me to infer that the opinion generally entertained of the Bostonians is correct—namely, that they are generally speaking more given to intellectual pursuits, and less addicted to *chewing* and its consequences, than the inhabitants of any city in the Union.* But more of Boston and its peculiarities in my next letter.

* I afterwards made many acquaintances amongst them, and saw no reason to change my opinion.

LETTER VI.

PHLEGMATIC CHARACTER OF THE BOSTONIANS—
MOUNT AUBURN CEMETERY—FRESH POND—
LIBRARY—MUSEUM—LADIES' SALOON.

Boston—October.

AMONG the peculiarities which afforded me pleasure in Boston, I must not forget to mention the total absence of smoking in the streets, *and their consequent cleanliness*. The satisfaction I felt was not so much on account of the freedom from personal annoyance as from the astonishing fact that *smoking* on the *republic* highway is forbidden by law in Boston! Verily, I could have fancied myself in St. Petersburg; and certainly in no other of the cities of Europe would such a law (even if enacted) be submitted to without resistance. In Boston, no one seemed to think of evading it, though the great fondness of the people for the 'noxious weed' must have rendered obedience an irksome task.

I hardly remember to have heard a laugh, or seen a smile, all the time we have spent in this city; and it would take some trouble to convince me that cheerful sounds ever echo through their streets, or that joyous faces are *ever* seen among

them. They *may* have their jokes—Heaven forbid they should not!—and they *may* sometimes brim over with merriment, and shake their sides with *larter*, as other people do ; all I can say is, that *I* never saw them do so, nor could I in my wildest flights of imagination bring myself to believe a Bostonian capable of such acts of flightiness.

In most of the northern cities, the burial-grounds are points of great attraction, and often places of favourite resort, and to the Bostonians they seemed to be congenial and meet spots for recreation. I had no peace from the solicitations of my friends till I had paid a visit to the Mount Auburn Cemetery. It is a place of interment somewhat after the fashion of the far-famed Père-la-Chaise, but with some striking differences. These are attributable partly to the widely opposite characters of the French and Americans, and partly to the comparatively few monuments to the dead which are seen at Mount Auburn. In Paris, the friends and relations of the deceased deck the graves of the departed with wreaths of never-dying flowers, and thus *seem* at least to keep memory alive in their hearts. The less sentimental Americans, on the contrary, content themselves with a magnificent tomb, and then bury *their* dead and their memory (to all appearance) in one common grave.

The cemetery is about five miles from Boston, and near the town and university of Cambridge ; it

is of great extent, though *how* large I did not inquire ; this, however, I know, that we wandered about till I was fairly tired out, up hill and down dale, and through the most beautiful woods, and along well kept and sequestered paths and carriage drives. There is an entrance to the cemetery between two lodges ; they are built of granite, and are in very good taste, and over the gateway is the beautiful and appropriate verse, ‘ The dust shall return to the earth, from whence it sprung ; but the spirit shall return to God, who gave it.’ Most of the tombs are very simple in their character, the stern religion of the descendants of the puritans rendering all ornament and appearance of decoration very obnoxious to them ; neither did we find many with any particular notice of the departed, further than the name and age engraved on the stone. Here and there, however, the family vaults of some of the wealthy inhabitants of the city were conspicuous, from their being monuments of white marble, instead of granite, of which by far the greater number were constructed. The favourite emblem—and, indeed, it was almost the only one—seemed to be the *broken pillar*, and this, seen through the gloom of the cypress trees, has a very beautiful effect. A small chapel is in progress of erection ; its site is well chosen, and it will be, when completed, a very fine work of art. It must be remembered that these silent memorials of the

dead are not thickly crowded together, and that in this respect Mount Auburn differs greatly from Père-la-Chaise ; you come upon them unawares, in sequestered and sheltered nooks, and little wooded hollows, or nestled under gentle eminences. There are an infinite number of paths and roads in the burial-ground, each of which bears a separate name, generally that of a tree or flower. In every direction you perceive boards fastened to the trees, bearing such names as 'Violet' or 'Mossy Paths;' I noticed also, 'Narcissus,' and 'Holly,' as well as 'Cypress,' and 'Cedar Avenues.' Each walk is named after the particular plant, tree, or shrub, which in it or around it most abounds ; by far the most impressive of these avenues is 'Cedar Path;' there is something in the contrast of the dark gloom which hangs about it, with the glaring sunshine without, which fills the mind with sensations of awe and reverence. There,

Cedar and cypress threw
Singly their depth of shadow, chequering
The greensward, and, what grew in frequent tufts,
An underwood of violets, that by fits
Sent up a gale of fragrance.

The sight of this really *romantic* cemetery, so different from, and so superior to, any which our less utilitarian country can boast, raised the character of its Boston founders immeasurably in my estimation, for I could not previously have believed it

to be in the nature of these unpoetical and unideal people, to dedicate to their dead so lovely a resting-place. Exactly opposite the entrance to the burial-ground there is a spacious *hoe-tel*,* where the wants of man can be supplied 'to any amount,' and if you may put any faith in the liberal announcement on the sign post, the afflicted friend may quench his thirst, and drown his sorrows in any cheering liquor he may happen to prefer. *Temperance*, however, has so many disciples here, that I should doubt 'tavern keeping' being so profitable a trade now, as it was some years ago.

About a mile from Auburn is 'Fresh-Pond,' the magnificent lake of pure water to which the London world are so deeply indebted for its liberal supply of 'Wenham Ice,' the clearest and most beautiful in the world. It is a very pretty spot, and indebted to nature for many a rural charm and pleasant prospect. The ice is cut into blocks twenty-two inches square, by means of a machine invented expressly for the purpose, and called an ice-cutter. It is then packed in sawdust, and sent all over the world.

We devoted one day to the Public Library and Museum. The collection of curiosities in the latter is quite in its infancy, and it therefore contains at

* The way in which that word is almost invariably pronounced in America.

present but few objects of interest. I ought, however, to except a very fine and perfect specimen of the mastodon, for the purchase of which a subscription has been set on foot by the heads of Cambridge College, with the intention of transferring the mighty skeleton to the museum of that institution. The library is, in most respects, an excellent one, and contains about thirty thousand volumes of the best and most sterling kind. Works in English, French, Italian, and German, and modern as well as less recent literature, with all the ancient lore usually found in foreign libraries, are met with here. The gallery of sculpture is also worth visiting, and the Bostonians are not a little vain of the native talent it displays. A bust of Webster, by Powers, is extremely well executed, and there is a statue of Orpheus worthy of a place in any gallery in the world. I had, however, what may be thought the bad taste to be most pleased with the embodying of an exquisite imagination in the shape of 'Oliver Twist.' The attitude of the reclining figure is one touching in its abandonment; the cap by the side, and even the *torn trouser*, are executed with wonderful fidelity; and though poor little Oliver is only a stone figure, you feel moved to pity as you look at him. I heard with great satisfaction that the artist was an Englishman, and had been a pupil of Flaxman's. Talent of every kind meets with great encourage-

ment at Boston, and they pique themselves here on its being the only city in the Union where there is anything approaching to an aristocracy of literature. I should imagine, however, that Philadelphia could fairly compete with Boston in this respect; and why the former should arrogate to herself this superiority over her literary rival, I am as yet at a loss to imagine.

We were shown a small theatre, which we were told was frequently devoted to other purposes than that of the 'legitimate drama.' Just now, Professor Lyel is giving within its walls a course of lectures on geological subjects, which are extremely well attended. Some years ago a Boston gentleman, of scientific pursuits, bequeathed a considerable sum of money, the interest of which was to be spent in furthering the pursuit of 'knowledge under difficulties.' It was specified in the will of this patriotic Yankee, that a certain number of lectures were to be given during the year, the expenses of which were to be defrayed by his bequest. The only subject expressly mentioned was that of natural religion, and on this a stated number of lectures were annually to be given. On what branches of science the others were to treat, was left to the discretion of the trustees.

The Boston people are great as merchants; there is no denying this, and among their principal *imports* we ought not to forget to mention that of

‘book learning.’ Their literature of home manufacture is not extensive, and for the most part is of inferior fabric. Like other things, it will doubtless improve both in quality and quantity; but at present, like much of their other ‘native produce,’ the little that there is, is not properly valued, for verily ‘prophets are not honoured in their own country.’

There is an idea very prevalent among foreigners, (and especially among the English,) who have either *not* visited Boston, or *have* done so without proper credentials and introductions, that the wealthy inhabitants of this mercantile city are wanting in hospitality to strangers. Even supposing this to be the case, (which, however, even from my limited experience, I am very much inclined to doubt,) who, in their sober senses, could wonder at it? It is only necessary to ask, what return English travellers have generally made for the attention and kindness of Americans, to convince ourselves that the bestowers of hospitality have had but little encouragement to pursue the conciliating system, as far as their ‘cousins’ across the water are concerned. How can they be expected, willingly, to take a spy into their camp, whose only object is, as they well know, to *pick up* and exaggerate their absurdities? If it be asked with what purpose this is done, I should say, and I speak advisedly, *in nine cases out of ten to make*

a book of them, and such a book as, by its ridicule of their entertainers, will ensure to itself popularity in their own country.

I must confess, for my own part, that the great *want* I felt at Boston, was that of finding something, or somebody to laugh *at*, or failing that, to laugh with. But the thing was impossible. I never saw people so little curious about other folk's matters, or so imperturbably and seriously engrossed with their own, in my life. As for the table-d'hôte dinner, (*alias* ordinary,) it was, without exception, the most gloomy banquet it was ever my bad fortune to assist at. *Milk* in glass jugs was placed by each guest, and the 'strong men,' having bolted large quantities of the meat fit for them, washed it down with large draughts of the 'food for babes;' and, as might be expected, seemed in no way enlivened thereby. After a very cursory examination (for we only dined twice at the 'ladies' ordinary') of the component parts of the society assembled at the Pavilion Hotel, I decided, that, far from being surprised at the want of *life* and good fellowship which they displayed, it would be rather more odd were it otherwise. What can possibly be expected in the way of friskiness from the descendants of *Englishmen*, who had been transplanted to a soil and climate still more ungenial than their own; and whose children have

been for two centuries exclusively occupied by business, and mercantile affairs? What, I ask, could you expect from such a beginning but—A YANKEE?

The ladies' saloon was very fully occupied all the time we were in the hotel. It was a large, well-proportioned apartment, with a good many rocking-chairs sprinkled about, on which the fair occupants sat and swung themselves for hours together, after the manner of restless and uneasy parrots in their huge brazen rings. The young ladies looked just as *desœuvres*, and were quite as noisy, and very nearly as gaudy. I scarcely ever did more than look at them on my way to my own apartment, and I invariably saw them on the same chairs, and in the same attitudes, *doing* nothing, and apparently *thinking* as little. Some of them were very pretty, and delicate looking, and moreover would have been well dressed, if they could have contented themselves with fewer colours. If I could summon up a wish about them, it would be, that they would pitch their voice in a lower key, and if possible not speak through their noses. Why is it that, throughout 'the whole of this vast continent,' the nasal twang should invariably prevail? I have given up trying to account for this peculiarity, and greatly fear I shall go to my grave without being enlightened on this interesting

branch of physiology. I have heard that the same manner of speaking prevails in New Holland, in quite as remarkable a degree, And now, farewell, my next letter shall be from Albany.

LETTER VII.

DEPARTURE FROM BOSTON — PRETTY COUNTRY—
ARRIVE AT ALBANY—TEMPERANCE HOTEL—UN-
HEALTHY MODE OF LIFE IN AMERICA.

Albany—October.

WE started from Boston at eleven in the morning, leaving much to be seen at a future period, as well as some friends of whom we would gladly have known more. Our first resting-place was to be Albany, but we did not intend to stop there, as our object was to make our way in all haste to Niagara, so as to arrive there before the trees should be quite denuded of their many-coloured leaves. The distance is about two hundred miles, and the time occupied by the journey, ten hours: the usual allowance being twenty miles to the hour. It was a very severe day. Five dozen poor human beings were packed together as closely as possible, and the suffocating stove, and the unpleasant results of the pocketing of apples (New England is unfortunately a great *producing* country for that fruit) had all to be endured over again. If a window was opened near me, a very polite, closely-shaved Yankee, invariably came up with a request that it might be shut. ‘Sir, a *lady* would

be obliged to you, if you'd just close that window, we feel like catching cold here.' I must not forget to remark, that whenever an American wishes to obtain any little travelling privilege, he is sure to invoke the magic name of 'lady,' and he is then certain that everything and everybody will give place. If the cars, on leaving the *depôt* happen to be full, a *single* gentleman, who arrives too late for a good place, may wait in vain for any attempts made by the passengers to afford him room. On such an occasion, if he is a *smart* Yankee, and very few of them are not, he will proclaim aloud (whether with truth or otherwise, no matter) that a *lady* is expecting him, and immediately he is invited in; while every one seems ready to compress themselves into the smallest possible space in so sacred a cause.

The country between Albany and Springfield (at which place we stopped to dine) is rather pretty—at least, for New England; but when we again set off, after devouring our dinner in a shorter space of time than I could previously have believed possible, I grew every moment more pleased with the scenery. As we approached the mountain range between the Connecticut and Hudson Rivers, the features of the country became much bolder. There is a great deal of engineering skill manifest in the making of this road, but notwithstanding this, the hand of man has not succeeded in greatly spoiling

what nature has made so fair. The train passed through pretty glens, and along hills covered with timber, nor were there wanting rocks and mountain streams to fill up the picture, which was a prettier one than any I had yet seen in America. We crossed the 'lordly Hudson' in a steam ferry-boat, a most disagreeable interlude in a railroad journey. There was a tremendous rushing and struggling for the best places on board, which lasted till we were half way across; and then began a violent effort, on the part of every one in the boat, to get the furthest 'forward,' so as to be the first to land. The crowd was great, and the smoking vehement; moreover, there was a 'liquoring bar' on board, which had no lack of customers; still, and notwithstanding these amusements, the first and most anxious affections of each passenger were evidently (for the moment, at least) fixed upon his own particular seat in the cars, and on his treasures of hat, cloak, and umbrella. As we approached the land, it was amusing to see the energy with which those adventurous spirits, who had (by dint of bodily strength and perseverance) gained the envied spot, jumped eagerly to the land before the boat had touched it. One, and one only (to my surprise), got a wetting, having overrated his powers of activity. We, after untold exertions, found ourselves, we scarcely knew how, shuffled into our places again, and (what in any other

country would have been still more surprising) our *plunder* (in English, *luggage*) was *as we left it*.

The railroad arrangements here, with regard to luggage, are excellent. No *quantity* is a source of difficulty or expense; and it is only necessary to have a ticket put on each article, while a corresponding one made of *tin* is given to *you*, which must be delivered when you again require your property. Our English servant always arranged this for us very cleverly, and never had the slightest difficulty about it.

Arrived at Albany, the 'empire city' and capital of the state of New York, we repaired, according to our directions, to Delavan's Temperance Hotel. It is considered the best here, and is delightfully new, clean, and comfortably furnished. Positive luxury is to be found in all the rooms, and the *toilet* arrangements are worthy of England. A gong summoned us to the dining saloon directly after our arrival. It was an immense room, containing two long tables, and more than a hundred people. The meal was a compound of dinner, tea, and supper. Huge beefsteaks (I often wondered how they came to be so large, for they looked like half-a-dozen fastened into one, *flat-wise*) smoked on a metal dish, with fire beneath it, and *Mr. Delavan* himself sat at the head of the table, and carved out gigantic lumps for his guests with incredible rapidity. The quantity and variety of

other comestibles, including roast chickens, mutton-chops, sweetmeats, stewed oysters, eggs, and pumpkin pies, were as marvellous as the celerity with which it all disappeared from the surface of the table. As usual, it was all washed down with milk, and then each person pushed his chair back *gratingly* on the uncarpeted floor, put his *quid* into his mouth again, and walked off. The attendants were numerous, and almost all of sombre hue. Their dress contrasted finely with the shining black of their complexions, being composed of snow-white *vests and pants*; in our language, they were clothed in white in the matter of waistcoats and pantaloons.

The ladies' saloon is by many of the uninitiated supposed to be unapproachable ground, and quite sacred from the intrusion of the male species. 'No admission either on business or pleasure,' is supposed by some misguided travellers in America to be the motto of their *reserved and exclusive 'females.'* I can, however, assure them to the contrary; and can venture to assert, that even if gentlemen are not sufficiently provident of their own comfort to travel with a female relation, (in which case they become without question asked honorary members of the ladies' community) they will enjoy the privilege of *entrée* equally well, by acting as escort, real or nominal, to any *female* acquaintance they may possess.

These little arrangements are by no means uncommon when travelling in the United States. It is here not at all unusual for ladies to travel alone, nor is it considered as *contre les bienséances* for them to avail themselves of the escort of any polite stranger they may happen to meet with on the journey.

The pianoforte in the ladies' saloon at Delavan's Hotel seemed to be in great request; for we underwent a constant succession of noisy songs till one o'clock in the morning. The burning of the sulphurous *anthracite* coal, and the suffocating atmosphere produced by its fumes, and by the universal use of close stoves, is altogether very disagreeable. The high temperature of their apartments, and their unhealthy mode of heating them, are, I have no doubt, some of the causes to which we may attribute the pale looks and sunken jaws of the Americans. From the first hour after our landing, I had been struck with the absence of healthy colour in individuals of both sexes, and of all classes. It is very rare to see an American with a clear, fresh complexion, and still more uncommon to find one who is possessed of good or white teeth. And as for the children! taking into consideration *their* pallid faces, and generally unthriven appearance, it is almost a subject for wonder that they do not grow up into '*humans*' still more blighted-look-

ing than the full grown men actually are. I quite longed to see a rosy-cheeked child, and was still more anxious to prevent the little miserable animals from eating the quantity of unwholesome food in which their parents and guardians allowed them to indulge. The young free-born citizens of the Union seemed to me to be seldom occupied in any other way than in devouring raw apples or hiccory nuts; and it is highly probable that (even if it were possible to convince their papas and mammas that such a proceeding causes many of the depressing complaints to which so many of them are subject) no efforts to induce the children to give up the obnoxious habit would be resorted to. The *coercive* system in America is too unpopular to be used even with their own children, and from their earliest infancy the watchwords of 'liberty,' 'equality,' and 'fraternity,' are understood, as far as they can be, and reasoned upon by the young Republicans.

I believe that the Americans themselves do not dispute the fact, that (as *a race*) they are considerably inferior in physical strength to their ancestors. That the 'Anglo-Saxon' breed has degenerated, as far as outward appearance goes, is undeniable; but why it is so it is impossible to say. It is, perhaps, still more difficult to account for the different breeds of English sheep becoming invariably in America wretched animals instead

of fine ones. It is, in fact, quite as unusual a sight to meet a really fine-looking man in New England as it is to taste a good leg of mutton. The biped grows up long, thin, and weedy, with hollow cheeks, narrow shoulders, small hands and feet, and a good deal of nose: as for the woolly animal, there is *no* apparent reason why it should not retain its peculiar characteristics of 'Leicestershire' or 'Southdown' to the end of time; but it does not, and though the greatest care and attention are paid them—though the parent stock is imported from England, and not unfrequently their own shepherds also—though turnips are grown for their support in winter, and no expense is spared by the New England farmer to keep up the breed in perfection—nothing succeeds. The experiment has been tried in the barren soil of New England, in the fertile valleys of Kentucky, and also in the wild mountains of Georgia, and always, I have been told, with the same ill success. I have devoted so much time to *mes moutons*, that I must close my letter, and will write again after I have been to Trenton.

LETTER VIII.

DESCRIPTION OF ALBANY — UNINTERESTING COUNTRY — SCHENECTADY — THE MOHAWK RIVER — PICTURESQUE VILLAGE — ARRIVAL AT UTICA.

Utica—October.

SUCH was our impatience to reach *the* wonder of the western world, that we agreed not to devote more than one entire day to seeing what *was* to be seen at Albany. Immediately after breakfast, we ordered ourselves to be driven down to the river, where, having climbed to the upper deck of one of the large steamers lying along the quay, we had an excellent view of the city. We were, however, more impressed with respect for its commercial appearance than with admiration for the charms of its situation. The river is a noble one; and the quays and basins along its banks were crowded with shipping. The city (which, by the way, was christened after our James the Second of unlucky memory) has more the appearance of a Dutch than an 'American' town. It is built on what can barely be called rising ground, though there is certainly a declivity towards the water; I should say, however, that no part of the city is more than one hundred feet above the

level of the river. Looking to the south, you catch a glimpse of the Katskill Mountains; and far away to the north are seen the distant hills of Vermont.

I find that Albany is considered by its inhabitants one of the finest cities in America; its streets are, however—most of them—insignificant and irregularly built; notwithstanding that in them you do occasionally see very handsome-looking public buildings, particularly among the *hotels*. Its very *fussy* and business-like air renders it particularly unattractive to a mere idler, and I felt no wish that our stay should be prolonged. Albany appears to be the very focus and centre of commerce, for the Erie and Champlain canals enter the Hudson River six miles above the city, at Troy. This strangely named town is classically situated between Mounts Ida and Olympus. It is a very thriving place, and has already taken a great deal of business from Albany. This is owing in a great measure to its being nearer the ‘head of navigation,’ and this, I am told, is considered a great advantage in the commercial position of all American cities. In ‘*land privileges*,’ however, the Albanians have the advantage over the Trojans, for they are on the direct line of railroad from Boston to Buffalo.

There are many public institutions here; colleges, museums, and public libraries—the regular things, in short, which, good, bad, or indifferent,

one is doomed to *inspect* in any hitherto unknown city where one may chance to find oneself. All these doubtless we *ought* to have seen, but we resisted every solicitation, and recommenced our pilgrimage to Niagara without delay. I must, however tell *you*, who are so particularly interested on the subject of the state of religion in America, that there is no want of churches in Albany for people of all persuasions. In short, there are different places of worship for each of the following sects: the Episcopalian, which I put first, as in duty bound; the Methodist (African); Baptist (coloured); and Lutheran (ditto); the Unitarian (which has a great many followers in this part of the States);* the Dutch Reformed, Roman Catholic, and Independent churches; to say nothing of Jewish synagogues, *Mission Houses*, and Bethnal and 'Friends' meeting-houses. There is liberty of conscience in religious matters, if in nothing else in America.

It was a bright bracing morning when we bade adieu to Albany. It had frozen hard during the night, and it was sufficiently cold to cause travellers to walk briskly to the cars, and, when there, to crowd round the stove in their blanket coats for warmth. The carriage was as crowded as usual,

* The religions tenets of Cambridge University are Unitarian.

and a long-haired, thin-faced, unkempt man, who sat near us, having premised that he '*expected*' we were *strangers*, entered into conversation. 'Well, Sir, I guess you've no travelling like this in the old country; I do expect we've a long chalk afore you in steam, anyhow.' This was said with that sort of—'Contradict me if you can, but I know you can't,' look which speaks more eloquently than words, and then he went on through the usual dictionary—'Go a-head!' 'Steam up!' 'Flash of lightning!' &c. &c. &c., nearly all the way to Utica. We inquired of our voluble acquaintance, before we started, whether two o'clock was not the time when we might reasonably hope to arrive at our journey's end. 'Well, I expect that *is* about the *calculation*,' was his oracular reply, and with this we were obliged to be contented. Just at this moment, there was a banging of doors, a loud cry from the conductor of 'All aboard,'—'go a-head,' and we sped away to Utica.

The fondness evinced by the Americans for calling places by high-sounding and ancient names, has been often remarked upon by travellers. This *fancy*, though perhaps more ridiculous, is even less excusable, as an error in good taste, than their habit of resorting to the mother country for such appellations as Manchester, Birmingham, or Chatham. There is something praiseworthy in the vaulting ambition displayed in the former

choice, but why they should prefer our modern-world names to the soft-sounding appellations originally bestowed by the Indian tribes, I am at a loss to imagine. Their doing so is a great mistake, as besides the actual beauty of the sound, there is generally a meaning attached to the Indian word, which adds greatly to the interests of the place.

We travelled for miles through a barren and uninteresting country, the soil of which is sand, and the surface thickly covered with stunted pines. Occasionally we passed farms and cultivated lands, but the general character of the scenery, till we arrived at Schenectady, was that of a barren and uncleared waste. This place, which is here called (in common with every small collection of houses) a city, would not certainly have been dignified by us with a high-sounding title. It lies on the Mohawk River, and was originally settled by the Dutch as early as the year 1620. It was called by the Indians, in their poetical and meaning language, Schagh-nac-ta-da, which being interpreted, means 'Behind the pine plains;' and is one of the very few settlements which have retained anything like their original name. It is now, however, shortened into the less euphonious appellation of Schneckidy. It is a prosperous place, and contains, I believe, about eight thousand inhabitants. In its neighbourhood is 'Union' College, an institution which

is said to be admirably conducted. It derives its name, not, as might be supposed, from the union of *states*: but from the circumstance of its founders (though members of various religious persuasions) having offered the advantages of their college to men of every faith.

After passing Schenectady, we travelled through some exceedingly beautiful scenery. The railroad skirted the Mohawk, through the rich valley of which river our course lay; and here I think it advisable to remark, that there are no such things as railway tunnels, or *cuttings*, in the United States. The engineers infinitely prefer going round the hills to working their way through them, and perhaps in this peculiar country they are in the right. The workmen employed are mostly Irish; indeed, it would appear that one of the few uses to which an Irishman can be put, is to make a *navvy* of him. The race are neither better nor worse than adverse circumstances, and their own reckless natures, have made them in other parts of the world; but spirits here are unfortunately cheap, and this, with their own inherent love of independence, renders them perhaps somewhat more dangerous characters than they are at home, where they have not so wide a field for their exploits.

During the latter part of this day's journey, we passed through several pleasant looking villages, the beauty of one of which, with its truly rustic

cottages and happy-faced inhabitants, deserves to be recorded by the magic pen of Miss Mitford herself. It lay imbedded between high granite rocks, from the clefts in which the pine and the cypress shot their dark-green foliage; while a beautiful fall of the Mohawk dashed along through the narrow valley, and glistened and sparkled in the sunshine. Altogether, I thought it one of the most lovely spots on which my eyes had ever rested. Its name is 'Little Falls;' of *course*, it has its manufactories, but they are not offensive to the sight, and only add to the prosperous aspect of the place. A great deal of woollen and paper manufactures is carried on at Little Falls; and the mills are worked by the river Mohawk, which has here a fall of upwards of forty feet, within the distance of half a mile.

No sooner did the cars arrive at Utica than the agents of the different hotels rushed tumultuously forward, hemming us in on every side, and boasting as volubly of the merits of their respective establishments, as the noisiest French *Commissionaires* who ever gained their living in a similar manner. Some of them thrust printed papers into our hands, one of which contained, greatly to my amusement, the following curious announcement:—'Civil and *gentlemanly* porters are always at hand, to attend to the wishes of the *guests*.' We have taken up our quarters at

‘Bleeker’s Hotel ;’ it is an immense building, but a considerable portion of it is shut up for the season. But I find that I must now close my letter. I have lingered so long on the Utica journey, that I must send off this dispatch, and trust to sending you an account of Trenton Falls (not a description, that, I know beforehand, would be impossible) in my next letter.

justified in his panegyric. No less than four times during the journey did we stop to give the poor animals water, and this, not because they appeared exhausted, but from the custom which is followed here of allowing horses to drink largely on a journey. I have no doubt that to this cause, as well as to the heating nature of *Indian corn*, may be attributed the great number of broken-winded horses that one meets with in America.

In spite, however, of repletion, the willing little steeds took us *along* at a good, steady pace, down steep hills, covered with large stones, sometimes trotting at the rate of twelve miles an hour, and never making a false step. It seemed a dreary country to live in. The farm-houses are generally long distances apart, and there is a vast deal of land still in process of clearing. The blackened stumps of the burnt down trees were, in most of the fields, still standing in great numbers, and rendering (as they always do) the culture of the ground difficult and laborious. Again, the unsightly 'settlers' fence' offended the eye, and the scarcity of human habitations gave us an impression of gloom and desolation. The price of an acre of good land, in this part of the country, is about fifty dollars; but then it must be *cleared* land, or it will not fetch the half. When the immense amount of labour and expense which is incurred in bringing the

soil into a proper state for cultivation, is considered, the sum demanded for it, which is about ten pounds of our money, seems barely sufficient to enable the seller to realize any important profit.

In the course of three hours, and not before—for there is much *up hill* as well as *down hill* work—we reached the inn to which travellers in search of the picturesque must fain betake themselves, for it is the only house within sight of the Falls. The hotel is situated on the borders of the forest, and looks over a great extent of open country; but on arriving at its door, which stood invitingly open, we were quite unprepared to find such grand scenery so immediately in its neighbourhood. Owing to the lateness of the season, the house, like all those which depend on summer visitors for their support, was nearly without inhabitants. Guides or *helps* there were none, but we were told that we could not mistake our way to the Falls; so, without any delay, we followed the path pointed out to us. On arriving at the high bank of the river, which is a few hundred yards from the hotel, we had to descend a long flight of steps, rather a perilous undertaking, as they are cut (without much regard to security or convenience) in the perpendicular rock, which is here more than a hundred feet in perpendicular height. However, we performed the feat in safety, and then found

ourselves at the bottom of a chasm, down which the river rushes with inconceivable force. The platform on which we stood was a smooth slab of stone, broad, level, and slippery, and the black and brawling stream was on a level with this natural pavement. The river was not wide, and as we watched it pursuing its vexed and tumultuous course within a few feet of where we stood, I could almost have fancied it some living thing, fretting at the vast and insurmountable impediments which nature had placed in the way of its occupying a greater and more extended space. On either side of it, at the distance of about twenty feet, rose perpendicular rocks, composed of black limestone. The strata of the rocks was so exactly horizontal and equal in thickness, that one could hardly help imagining it to be the work of human hands. About half way up these natural and fearful boundaries grew small and stunted trees, clinging for life to the narrow fissures in the rocks, and bending down their heads towards the mighty torrent. Above these dwarf cypress and hemlock shrubs, rose high in air the giant trees of the primeval forests, which nearly met above our heads. And there *above* was the glorious sky, reduced to a narrow *strip* of blue by distance, and the awful rocks on either side of us. We turned our eyes upwards to gaze on it, and then the sensation of awe and wonder was complete.

It is 'a weight of awe not easy to be borne' that falls upon one's spirit while in the midst of such a scene as this; and truly I felt, at that moment, with the poet, 'such solitude should teach men how to die.' It was too oppressive to the nerves and spirits, and we gladly turned our thoughts to the business of the hour once more; and I confess that I never felt better pleased with the sound of the human voice than when that of my companion roused me from my trance of almost painful admiration. At this time, the Falls themselves were still hidden from our view by a projecting elbow in the rock, at the very base of which the angry waters rushed with tenfold impetuosity. Round this point it was absolutely necessary that we should make our way, with the waters boiling at our feet, and washing the side of the precipice; and above us, that smooth, black wall, which, even at a greater distance, had looked so inexpressibly awful. The path along which we had to creep had been cut in the solid rock, and was very narrow—certainly not more than a foot in width—and in some places not exceeding six inches. At the worst place, *staples* had been placed in the rock, to which a chain was attached, and to this I clung with a grasp rendered convulsive by a sense of the imminent danger of our position. It was only in consequence of the sad death by drowning of two poor young ladies, who fell into the stream at this point, that

the slight security afforded by the chain was thought necessary. Having rounded the point, I was amply repaid for all the terror I had undergone. The gorge beyond it becomes considerably wider, and as we looked *up* the stream, a succession of magnificent waterfalls greeted our sight, and the 'dread peal of swelling torrents' filled the air. The lowest of these falls was spanned by a frail bridge, but to attempt to describe the scene upon which we gazed from it would be vain. A wild waste of glittering and turbulent waters below, and the glorious forests above and about us, formed a picture which must be seen ere it can be appreciated.

When we returned to our inn, which we did by the way we had come, our host urged us to take a view of the falls from some high ground, about a mile and a half from the house. The view from this point was, he assured us, even more beautiful than the one we had seen; but we had had (for that day, at least) enough of such exciting scenes, and we agreed to spend the night, with what comfort we could, in the half-deserted hostelry, and put off, till the next day, the sequel of sight seeing. The sun rose in all its bright autumnal beauty, and saw us early on foot; and that forest walk, even if there had been no cataract view at the end of it, would, I think, have repaid me for any exertion. We did not miss our way, though we had great difficulty in tracing the path, so completely

was it hidden by fallen leaves. After a time, however, the task became easier as the distant roar of the falls guided us to the spot from whence we were to view them. None of the trees were of large size, for they grew very closely together, and much of their foliage was gone, though enough still remained for beauty, and the tints were exquisite. A thick undergrowth of sycamore and yew covered the ground, while here and there a fallen tree, green with the moss of years, and shaded by fern-leaves, offered a tempting seat. Many a little grey squirrel, startled by our voices, tripped up the stems of the trees, or sprang from one leafless bough to another for greater security. I neither saw nor heard a single bird, though the day was warm, and the sun shone brightly. Many, I suppose, had already taken their early flight to some brighter land, like sensible birds as they were, for a winter in this rigorous climate would not leave many alive to tell the tale of their sufferings.

The falls, above which, after many *restings* and delays, we arrived at last, are indeed beautiful. I was able to approach near enough to feel the light spray upon my face, and to find our voices rendered perfectly inaudible by the din of the falling waters. There is a perpendicular rock, over which the water falls from the height of a hundred feet. In the centre, the fierce torrent divides, leaving the rock bare for a considerable space. At the base of

the rock the two torrents unite again, on a broad flat surface, from which they again descend, boiling and foaming down rocky steps and gigantic stones, till the whole falls together into the deep natural basin I have before attempted to describe. The stream I have been talking so much about is called the West Canada Creek, though it might with the greatest possible poetical truth be called 'the Styx' of the upper world. There are, in all, six regular falls within a distance of a mile and a half, and the descent of the water within that distance is supposed to be between three and four hundred feet. I have said what I *could* of Trenton Falls, but after having done so, I am only the more convinced of the utter impossibility of conveying to the mind of another any adequate idea of the reality of their overpowering beauty.

Our return to Utica was effected in a much shorter space of time than it had taken us to traverse the same road the day before. To enliven the way, we met numerous farmers' carts returning into the country from the business of attending the market at Utica. Some of these we recognised as having seen before, when 'bound' for the city, on which occasion they were laden with the farmer himself, his wife, and his tubs of butter. In exchange for the latter commodity, the wagons returned filled with sugar and molasses, besides numerous other articles for home consumption,

and some of household furniture. Everything was heaped on the wagon in a strange state of confusion—chairs came peeping out between the casks of molasses, and paper parcels, and perchance a child or two, half hid the mistress of all this heterogeneous mass of property from our sight. One great charm that must be felt by every one travelling in the United States is the total absence of any appearance of poverty or distress. Every man, woman, and child, one meets with, looks well-dressed, and, at least, comfortably off in their domestic circumstances. When I recollected the wretched objects which everywhere greet one in a journey through over-populated Europe, and the incessant calls made by the aged, the deformed, and the starving, upon one's compassion and one's purse, I felt the contrast afforded by the prosperous inhabitants of the American continent as doubly delightful. My next epistle shall be dated, I hope, from 'the Cataract Hotel.'

LETTER X.

LEAVE UTICA—RAILWAY JOURNEY THROUGH THE
FOREST—LOQUACIOUS TRAVELLER—ARRIVAL AT
AUBURN—CAYUGA LAKE—GENEVA—ROCHESTER
— GENESSEE RIVER — PICKPOCKETS — RAPID
GROWTH OF ROCHESTER—ITS PROSPERITY.

Rochester—November.

WE left Utica by an afternoon train, intending—steam willing—to reach the city of Auburn the same evening. The first part of our road lay literally through the uncleared wilderness. On either side of us stretched, what appeared to be, almost interminable forests, and these were composed of such thick masses of tall trees, that the eye could not penetrate above a yard or two into their depth of gloom. The obscurity was literally ‘impervious to the eye.’ Through these vast and time-honoured forests the busy and restless hand of man had cut a narrow pathway—a work, apparently, how insignificant, but in its results of what immeasurable importance! It was, in truth, a narrow pathway, for there is but one line of rails through the whole country we traversed. Occasionally, however, double rails are laid down for a

short distance to enable trains to pass each other. This arrangement is often a cause of considerable delay, as the trains are not always remarkable for punctuality. I was particularly struck during this day's journey by the absence of that peculiar species of awe and *distant* respect which is shown in other countries, particularly in our own, for a train in motion. I really think there must be some natural affinity between Yankee 'keep-moving' nature and a locomotive engine. It may be that in America the carriages do not move with the terrific speed that they do in the old country; but whatever the cause, it is certain that the 'humans' seem to treat the 'engine,' as they call it, more like a familiar friend than as the dangerous and desperate thing it really is. The Transatlantic gamins are even sufficiently reckless of the mighty power of a moving train as to jump up behind the cars when they are in motion; and they hardly seem to think it worth while to get out of its way as it passes by.

It was yet daylight when we passed through the city of Rome. Why this name was given, it would be in vain to guess, for the town does not even stand on *one* hill. It has, however, a bellicose association attached to it, from its being built on the site of Fort Stanwix, so celebrated in the first American war. The approach of evening, and the tall trees among which we were almost literally

buried, soon wrapt us in darkness — darkness, rendered visible now and then by the sparks and splinters that flew into the carriage from the burning wood, and from the lantern of some solitary pedestrian, who occasionally, but very rarely was met, or passed by our *locomotive*. We stopped, every now and then, to take in wood and water, but in spite of this, and also of the rattling noise made by the train when we *were* in motion, every one in the carriage soon slept, or at least appeared to do so, excepting one old man and myself. He, poor gentleman! seemed to be undergoing great uneasiness of mind, from want of knowledge of the locality. His intention and wish was to stop at Syracuse, and he was in great alarm lest, in the darkness of the night, he should overlook the place, and be carried on he knew not where. Railway travelling was to all appearance new to him, and from his consternation at what he evidently considered the immense rapidity of our movements, I could see that he was quite capable of echoing D. Crocket's remark, when he first saw a swiftly passing train, *Hell in harness, by Jupiter!* At every stoppage for wood, his high-toned nasal voice was heard exclaiming, 'Well! I guess this is Syracuse' (an immense accent on the final syllable)—'well, I guess this is Syracuse, at last; I wonder where these tarnation 'coons are going to!' No answer was vouchsafed to this remark, for

every one who could have given him a satisfactory one was asleep. As for me, greatly as I commiserated his situation, I could do nothing towards relieving his anxiety—my state of ignorance being as deplorable as his own. After a short pause, he began again. ‘I say, you eternal nigger,’ addressing a black man who was standing by the window—‘I say, you eternal nigger, is this *Syracuse*? I tell you I’m bound to go to *Syracuse*! I’ve bought an everlasting lot of cattle, and I tell you I could buy all the city, I could. Every one knows his own business best, and I *presume* I know mine.’ In this manner he went on, whether we were stationary or not, till at last, in utter despair, he gave his next neighbour a rousing push of no gentle kind, and called out in his very ear, ‘Well, sir, I ask you once more if this a’ant *Syracuse*, and if it a’ant, I wonder what, under the Almighty compass, it is!’ The awakened sleeper was evidently taken by surprise, but as it is quite contrary to a Yankee’s creed to be astonished at anything under the sun, he soon recovered himself, and, greatly to the relief of the worthy grazier, (for such he appeared to be,) gave him the desired information, which stopped his mouth for the time, and as he eventually reached his destination, we saw him no more.

Arrived at Auburn, which, though far from being ‘the loveliest village of the plain,’ is nevertheless a pretty and a well-built place, we drove to the

‘American Hotel,’ which is clean, comfortable, and orderly. The disproportionate number of the churches must strike every stranger on first visiting the cities in the United States. This peculiarity was very remarkable in Auburn, and was, in fact, the only thing which we much noticed in that place. I will not, however, venture to say that other travellers who stay longer may not discover a great many more wonders; *we* only remained a night at Auburn, and have, therefore, no right to give an opinion on the subject. About fifteen miles from our night’s halting-place, the prospect was agreeably, and rather unexpectedly, varied by a large lake, which burst suddenly upon our view. We had become so thoroughly wearied of the monotony of the uncleared forests that we hailed Cayuga Lake with delight. It is a much more beautiful feature in a landscape than the American lakes usually are; for its width is not so great as to prevent the opposite shore from being distinctly seen. Its length is about forty miles, and its width about four. That steam-boats ply upon its surface I need not say, for where in America does not the mighty power hold its sway? The fishing in this lake is said to be admirable. There are great quantities of large trout, perch, white fish, and pike. There were other kinds I knew mentioned to me, but their names I have forgotten.

The railroad crosses the lake, and that, too, in a manner which it would be death to a nervous person even to dream of. For a distance of more than two miles, the rails are laid on wooden posts, which are driven into the earth at the bottom of the lake. There is but just room for the line of rails, and no *fence* whatever on either side. A dreary waste of waters is seen from the windows, and over this highly unsatisfactory bridge one is hurried at full speed. Frequent were the exclamations of alarm which broke from the ladies, particularly from those who now for the first time trusted themselves on the insecure fabric, and felt the peculiar shaking movement, and heard the hollow sounds caused by the echoing of the novel style of bridge along which we were being propelled.

Ten miles further on is Seneca Lake, which very much resembles the one we had previously crossed. The railroad skirts its shore for a considerable distance, and thus we had full time to admire its beauties. Before taking leave of this lake, we came to Geneva, a town situated on its borders. It is not *quite* unlike its namesake, and though 'Lake Lemane *did not* woo us with its crystal face,' Seneca was not a very bad substitute. We were of course obliged to *imagine* Mont Blanc, and all the other accessories. At some distance from Seneca we passed another beautiful sheet of water, called Canandaigua Lake. It is eighteen miles long, and

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from one to one and a half broad ; the banks are beautifully wooded, and the trees, which grow close to the water, dipped their pendant branches into the stream. This lake is six hundred and seventy feet above the level of the Atlantic Ocean.

We had been very fortunate in having sunshiny weather ever since we left Boston, nor did its cheering influence fail us after our arrival at Rochester. This place, which is one of the most remarkable and flourishing cities in the Union, is situated on the Genessee river, which runs through the very centre of the town. Numerous handsome bridges are thrown across this broad and most useful stream, and one of these—namely, that nearest to the celebrated Genessee Falls, is appropriated to the railroad. From this bridge the traveller catches a splendid view of the cataract, which is not fifty yards from it. The water here falls from a height of more than a hundred and fifty feet, *perpendicularly*, into the river below.

We took up our quarters at the ‘Eagle Hotel,’ a large, overgrown, wooden building, but which, notwithstanding its huge dimensions, we found full even to overflowing. It was ‘court time,’ as the assizes here are denominated, and young judges, (every lawyer seemed to be a judge,) were bustling about, not exactly in wigs and gowns, but with as much importance as if they wore them, and as much apparent haste in their movements as I have

seen displayed by our own young barristers in a county town in England. There was no getting out of their way; at every turn they jostled and hustled one another in the long passages of the hotel; and it was impossible to go a yard without encountering a busy-looking, eager young gentleman, with a bundle of papers—not a blue bag—under his arm, and an air of defiance on his brow. There seemed, indeed, to be a considerable call for the exercise of their talents; and of this we were made aware on our first entrance into our sleeping apartments. On the doors, notices were painted in large white letters, warning all ‘guests’ to lock their bed-room doors previous to retiring to rest. The caution is by no means an unnecessary one, as thieves and pickpockets, all of whom are extremely expert in the exercise of their profession, abound in the United States. I heard of one man, who was so perfectly *au fait* at the sleight of hand required for this peculiar branch of *industrie*, that he succeeded in drawing the coat from under the head of a sleeping traveller, (where he had placed it for greater security,) and, after abstracting the purse, replacing the bereft garment in its original position. The notices affixed in conspicuous places at the several *dee-pots*, are also very significant of the class of gentry who overrun the States; there, as you enter, you see in large characters, ‘Beware of pickpockets,’ and at Boston we were told that

the greatest care and caution were required to protect one's property while travelling in the States. It is said, and there seems no reason to doubt it, that America is indebted to the human importations from the Old World, for the possession of these light-fingered gentry. The depredators are, I believe, for the most part, London thieves, who, finding their own country a somewhat dangerous residence, have crossed the water on speculation; and, notwithstanding the proverbial acuteness of the Yankee character, not a few of these adventurers have succeeded in realizing considerable sums.

Rochester is one of the most curious instances (among the many to be found in the United States) of the rapidity with which a small and insignificant village can become a large and important city. Almost before it seems possible to a looker-on that the walls can be completed, suddenly he sees that a house is inhabited, and, in all probability, in a few more days it will stand conspicuous as a store of rising eminence. And so it has been with Rochester; and the Americans themselves, whom few things in the way of celerity seem to astonish, quote the rapid growth of this city as a first-rate instance of 'go-a-headism.' Like most of the cities in the United States, it is indebted for its prosperity to the advantages of its position, and to the great water privileges afforded by the falls in the Genessee.

The descent of this river within the city, and the immediate neighbourhood of Rochester, is more than three hundred feet, and it is quite unnecessary to add that the natives have made the most of it. There are already nearly one hundred mills and factories, in which water power is used, established on this part of the Genessee; about twenty-five of these were, as we were told, flour mills, grinding about thirty thousand bushels of wheat daily. The demand for labour is great, and wages, consequently, high; altogether, the history of this one city would alone give the observant traveller an insight into the futurity of wealth and importance which await these long-headed and persevering people. I have often, in my own mind, compared the Americans, (the northern ones most particularly, who strive so unceasingly for gain,) to a nest of ants in full activity. Who has not watched these little animals when busily employed in their work of accumulation? Who has not respected the industry of each member of the little republic in his persevering efforts to increase his hoard? Each insect seems intent upon his own purpose, never turning to the right hand nor to the left, but working on untiringly to gain his ends, and increase his own store. Do not you see something in the busy selfishness of these little creatures which assimilates greatly with the Yankee character? There is the same toiling for accumulation, the same concentra-

tion of their faculties in the great aim of dollar-making, and the same want of variety in their *main* views and objects.

We were told that provisions at Rochester are as good and plentiful as in any city in the Union—New York not excepted—and certainly there seemed every appearance of it. The *ordinary* was excellently well supplied, and as for the stores they were really beautiful, and rich with the treasures of London and Paris. How indigenous is the love of *finery* in all our hearts! Here, in the very heart of the wilderness, were found shops full of the expensive toys which, wherever women are, are—

Bought because they *may* be wanted,
Wanted because they *may* be bought;

And ladies walked about, as they invariably do in America, with twenty dollars' worth of Parisian *coiffure* on their heads, and the prettiest little French *brodequins* in the world. As I shall have another opportunity of writing again from hence, I shall now close my letter.

LETTER XI.

UNHEALTHINESS OF ROCHESTER—NUMEROUS MILLS
 —FALLS OF THE GENESSEE—COURT OF ASSIZE—
 MOUNT HOPE CEMETERY—SHORTNESS OF HUMAN
 LIFE IN AMERICA—ITS POSSIBLE CAUSES—IN-
 CREASE OF TEMPERANCE.

Rochester—November.

THE city is only six miles from Lake Ontario, and is on the line of the Erie Canal. A great number of families from the old country, English, Scotch, and Irish, have come out to settle at Rochester, and have, for the most part, succeeded in earning a comfortable living. Those among them, however, with whom I talked on the subject, complained very much of the unhealthiness of the climate, (ague seemed to be the prevailing complaint,) and the numerous doctors established in the city made, by all accounts, a rich harvest out of the shaking frames of the poor emigrant Britishers. The servants in the hotel were most of them Irish, one of them, the *help* who attended to the ladies' room, was a pretty country-girl from Derry. She had a rich, soft brogue, which, after listening to the high-pitched Yankee voices, was as music in my ears ; and, more-

over, she had not been in the country long enough to become anti-Irish in her heart, for her bright black eyes seemed almost to dance with delight when I talked to her of her native country. After the *ordinary* dinner, which was at about four o'clock, we walked out to look at the Falls. In order to do this, we passed over a bridge to the eastward, and turning down a street which runs parallel with the river, we soon reached the outskirts of the city. The spot on which we stood was a wide open space, covered with short turf, well trodden by the feet of the pleasure seeking Rochester citizens, who, on Sundays, come with their wives and families to wander along the ledge of the precipice which overlooks the falls, and not a few of them to *liquor* in one or two *quinquette* looking *stores* on the ground. The view is, indeed, a grand one, and would be much more so in any other country; but here the mills and breweries and distilleries, which rise up in every direction, *unpoetize* the whole scenery, and I found myself wondering that, in the zeal to make the most of everything, the spirited Yankees had never yet thought of establishing some cotton factories at Trenton, or of grinding corn, with unheard-of rapidity, through the means of the great *water privileges* of Niagara.

The river rolled along a hundred and fifty feet beneath us. Looking *up* the stream, the water poured down this tremendous fall in one unbroken

sheet, and its width is (I should say) more than a hundred yards. It was a relief to look *down* the Genessee, and thus escape the sight of the odious factories ; for *there* flowed along the shining river, with its beautifully wooded banks just tinged by the setting sun, and though on its placid bosom a steamer or two *were* to be seen, they were too far off to be unsightly features in the landscape. We tried to catch a glimpse of Lake Ontario, so celebrated in Indian story ; but in vain—not even the least portion of it was to be seen.

The American tourists, though very proud of these falls as a ‘fine location,’ feel less interested in them as a beautiful specimen of nature’s work than as connected with the tragical end of poor Sam Patch the Jumper. This celebrated character, whose name will be remembered as long as the Genessee Falls shall last, was a Yankee sailor who had a wonderful, and certainly very unaccountable, passion for throwing himself off great heights. He had escaped unscathed through ‘imminent, deadly’ perils, having jumped off half the bridges, and exhibited his prowess in all the harbours in the old world. Nothing remained to him so worthy of his adventurous spirit as the great waterfalls of his native land. To these, then, he turned, and being without either a human rival or companion in his perilous feats, he was fain to associate himself with a *bear*, thinking, doubtless,

that such a *friend* would render his exploits more interesting to the numerous spectators who assembled to watch his *saltatory* efforts. The bear, which was a remarkably fine animal, had been trained to follow him in his leaps, and had invariably accompanied him. The performance which eventually proved too fatal to the unfortunate Sam, was not his first one, as regarded his jump over the Genessee Falls. The scene was not new to him; but he seems, nevertheless, to have had a melancholy presentiment of the fate which awaited him. By the accounts I have heard, it appears that though he showed no symptoms of fear, he resolutely forbade the attendance of his pet bear, which he had never before done. He then, with a courage worthy of a better cause, sprang boldly from the ledge of rock, and, to the horror of the assembled multitude, the unfortunate man never rose again.

The morning after our arrival, we were awoke early by the noise and bustle attendant on the departure of travellers by the early train. There was no use in attempting to court a return of slumber under such circumstances, so we rose; and, after an expeditious breakfast, in which, as usual, hot *corn* bread formed the principal *staple*, we proceeded to the Court House. We were in great hopes of witnessing some of those scenes which have often been described to us both in

books and *viva voce*, of judges, clothed in blanket coats, or, peradventure, without any upper garment on at all, and one and all wittily *impudent*; we expected, also, to find the self-same judges smoking and chewing, and each gentleman busily employed with his whitling knife. We were, however, grievously disappointed in the reality. There was nothing in the Assize Court either racy or ridiculous, and all we saw was decorous and uninteresting to the greatest degree. The court was well arranged in every respect, and, excepting the floor, perfectly clean. As to the men of law themselves, there was nothing in their outward man to distinguish them from others. A black silk waistcoat formed, as it does all over America, an invariable article of dress. Who that has ever been in this country has failed to notice those ‘everlasting vests?’ they may, in fact, be considered as quite a national costume. What struck me most was the eternal and perpetual shaking of hands. It was going on whichever way I turned my eyes, and yet there was no apparent pleasure or satisfaction on the countenances of those who made these friendly demonstrations, but always the same eager, watchful, suspicious look which I have observed as peculiar to the gentlemen of the Northern States. There was a very dull case being argued when we went in. The particular judge (who happened to be speaking) made mighty but

quite ineffectual efforts to make himself understood. He invariably began every sentence with the accustomed, 'Well, sir!' and never failed to repeat each remark twice over; but all would not do, and it was quite evident that the sense of the subject (if there were any) remained wrapped in obscurity. Still, however, the judge went perseveringly on, and we left him continuing his speech with as much industrious dulness as when he began it. The only pauses he made were to get rid of his mouthfuls of tobacco juice, which he did without any ceremony or attempt at performing the horrid deed in secret.

In the evening we took a drive in the environs of the city, and, at the instigation of our host of the 'Eagle,' we paid a visit to the Mount Hope Cemetery. We could not admire it so much as we did the burial-place near Boston, for it is neither so beautifully laid out, nor is there as much care bestowed and money expended upon it as there are at Mount Auburn; still the drives about the former are pretty, and it is tolerably spacious; some of the monuments, too, are really beautiful. The cemetery is of somewhat recent creation, so that the number of those who sleep below in their last quiet resting-place is not yet great. Still, with all its imperfections, (and, strange to say, the want of *occupants* of the *ground* was pointed out to us quite apologetically,) the good citizens of

Rochester are evidently proud of their cemetery. You will ask perhaps *why* it is that these people *are* so proud of these melancholy spots. It would be difficult, I think, to assign a satisfactory reason for this anomaly in Yankee character. It certainly does not proceed from any feeling analogous to the respect paid by the Red-Indians to the bones of *their* dead, for there *are* instances, and not unfrequent ones, of the Americans having run rail-roads through the more unpretending *grave-yards*; and that, too, when they might just as easily have gone round them. It cannot be pride of ancestry, and a wish that their fathers' names should go down to posterity on the marble tablet, for they have no ancestral honours of which to boast. What can it be, then, but because their cemeteries are more to be admired, and exceed in beauty any that are to be seen in Europe; and that jealousy of the *old* world is the great *spur* to *all* improvement in the *new*?

It is impossible, while reading the inscriptions on the tombs in most of these burial-places, not to be painfully affected by the proofs they afford of the shortness of human life in America. After reading the dates of births and deaths on these marble monuments, we found, that out of some hundreds of those who lay under the soft and yielding turf, very few had seen more than forty summers, and that by far the greatest proportion

had been summoned to their last account before their fifth lustre had been passed. We had long before this remarked, how rare a sight an aged man or woman was in America. There are no drooping forms or decrepit figures, no grey hairs or wrinkled faces: in short, it would appear that *age* does not, and cannot exist in the busy growth of this *new* country. All here is early, active existence, and the young have enough to do, without being obliged to fulfil what would appear to them the unprofitable task of 'rocking the cradle of declining years.' It would be a stretch of fancy, to which I confess myself perfectly unequal, to imagine in this utilitarian country, aged forms leaning on the protecting arm of a child, or a grandchild; nor do I think that if there *were* old gentlemen and ladies indiscreet enough thus to 'intrude upon posterity,' their delay in quitting the stage of life would be much approved of. I have often thought that this absence of old people; this want of—

A record which together binds
Past deeds and offices of charity,

may have a bad effect on the character. The rising generation, even if haply inclined to the un-American virtue of veneration, have no field for the exercise of sympathy and thought; and the silent monitor, the aged and helpless parent, is seldom there to call forth the most holy and beautiful

feelings of our nature. There is a link, too, wanting in the chain of human sympathies, which connects the rising generation with the '*long ago*' past, when the timeworn figure of the octogenarian is never seen 'with solemn steps and slow' among the robust and young—the prosperous and unthinking of the world. The Americans, however, have no *past*. The *present* is theirs, with its daily cares and pleasures; but they have so little to look back upon that they naturally glance a-head to what is to come. The future is before them, with its compound of vague hopes and fears, and they 'guess' and 'calculate' and 'presume,' that it will be a glorious one, when the brilliant *past* of the old world shall be the only treasure to which *it* can lay claim.

But I must return to the supposed causes of early deaths in the United States. Amongst the complaints to which the Northern Americans are subject, consumption stands first and foremost. That this fearful disease should find so many victims is not to be wondered at. The changes in the climate are extremely rapid, and the extremes of heat and cold very great. For these changes, the Americans never seem to be properly prepared; their dress, particularly that of the ladies, being ill calculated to defend them from the rough assaults of a biting wind, or from the unwholesome humidity with which the atmosphere is fre-

quently loaded. The demon of dyspepsia stalks about everywhere, with almost undisputed sway; and is, in all its varied forms, a 'fruitful source of human ill.' The medical men generally attribute the prevalence of this complaint, in a great measure, to the universal practice of stuffing themselves with hot corn-bread; and, as if these *dough doings* were not sufficiently poisonous in their effects, the benighted people wash it all down with immense quantities of new milk—a habit not approved of by the American faculty. Any one who has seen them perform their wonderful national feat of bolting beefsteaks, will also agree with me that there is nothing wonderful in their suffering a *little* after them. But notwithstanding the shortness of life observable in the United States, great men *have* sprung up among them. They have *now* their historians, their sculptors, and their poets; and who would deny them the hope that they will continue to produce remarkable men and women in every department? Just now, however—and I regret to see it—the species of *native* talent, which meets with the greatest encouragement amongst them lies among ballad-singers, dwarfs, and men monsters.

The virtue of Temperance is as much practised in this portion of the States, as we found it in New England, and the name of Father Mathew is infinitely revered. It very rarely happened

that either wine or spirit made its appearance at the public tables. Whether they indemnified themselves for their abstinence in secret, deponent saith not, but no opposition is made to the zealous endeavours of the Temperance people to make proselytes, and there is great sobriety of life, at least ostensibly. It often happens that both in rail-roads and steam-boats, orators are found who are nothing loth to exert their powers in favour of Father Mathew's doctrines: in general their audience is tolerably large, and they are attentively listened to, for the Americans are very fond of oratory, and they have, many of them, a great talent for declamation. A mighty reform has certainly been worked in the Northern States in the matter of drinking; but whether preachers would be listened to with equal complacency, if they were to take it into their heads to inveigh publicly against the little less offensive vices of chewing and smoking, remains to be proved. The evils attendant on smoking are, perhaps, not so glaring, but they are more insidious than those which await the drunkard. Drunkenness may and often does lead to misdemeanours of various kinds, and even to the commission of crimes—and this we know by the experience of past ages to be too frequently the case; but the very violence of the consequences of intoxication, renders it of necessity a vice to be shunned, and the person addicted

to it, to be contemned and avoided. But it is not so with the lover of the noxious weed. He is still, strange to say, tolerated in society though degraded by the dirty and unwholesome custom of chewing filthy tobacco, and of defiling the ground on which ladies are obliged to walk, *by the consequence of his atrocious and disgusting habit*. Men, under the circumstances, are, or ought to be, considered, by all persons of cleanly habits, as objects too dirty and disagreeable to be admitted within the pale of humanized society, and as living proofs of an observation that I have just read, that 'Tobacco is the grave of Love.' It is not necessary to remind me that my tirade against the use of tobacco is by no means a novel one: I am perfectly aware that the same thing has been said by every English traveller who has visited America; but as I am *as* equally certain that every former hint has done some *little* good in diminishing the consumption of tobacco in the States, I have added my quota of admonition and advice to the general stock.

Before I close my Rochester letter, I must give you a proof of one of the few good effects of the system of universal suffrage. It is this. Before we left England, we were charged with what appeared to us rather a vague commission by an old servant of the family. It was to discover and see her brother, who she *thought* was settled at Rochester,

and to report of his well being. Our only clue to him was our knowledge of his name, a particularly common one, and our certainty of the fact, that he had *once* lived at Rochester. Our chance of finding him seemed small indeed—a humble English individual was so easily lost among the twenty-five thousand inhabitants of such a town as this—so we almost gave up the business in despair. On hearing of our dilemma, our landlord brought us a thick octavo volume, on the pages of which were inscribed the names of every *free and enlightened citizen* of the county of Rochester, and by the help of this ‘universal’ suffrage book, we soon discovered the object of our search, and having fulfilled our promise, we shall soon prepare to bid adieu to Rochester. But I must now close this long letter.

LETTER XII.

A NIGHT AT BUFFALO—NIAGARA RIVER—FIRST DAY
AT THE FALLS—WHIRLPOOL—DEVIL'S HOLE—
CROSS TO THE CANADIAN SIDE — BURNING
SPRINGS—FAREWELL TO NIAGARA.

Niagara Cataract Hotel—November.

THE next morning we were on our road to Niagara! To obtain a sight of this mighty wonder had been, from my earliest years, one of the most eager, but, at the same time, the most hopeless longings of my mind! How nearly impossible, how vain, and wild, had ever seemed to me the realization of that intense wish! And now it was on the very eve of being gratified! A few more miles, and a little more patience, and this wonder of the world would be before me! We left Rochester at three o'clock in the afternoon, and reached the city of Buffalo, which is only thirty miles from Niagara, at nine o'clock the same night. Buffalo almost rivals Rochester in the rapidity with which it has sprung up into *showy* existence. I use the word *showy*; for there seems to be a greater number of fanciful looking buildings in it, than are generally found in American cities. They did not look very solid either, and were, I fancy,

for the most part built of wood. I felt bitterly disappointed at having to spend the night at Buffalo, as I had fondly hoped to have reached Niagara before I slept, and to have awoke the next morning within sound of the cataract's roar. There was, however, no help for it, as not a single conveyance could be obtained at so late an hour, and thus, at the uninteresting city of Buffalo, we were constrained to spend the night.

The next morning we departed in good time. The cars were very crowded and disagreeable, rather more so, in short, than usual ; but our minds were too full of anticipation to pay much heed to personal annoyance. For several miles before we reached the terminus, we saw and admired the broad Niagara River, stretching out before us, and giving us rich promise of the beauties which were still hidden from our view. There are small headlands jutting out into the stream ; and these are clothed with a deep mass, (I will not say of verdure,) but of foliage, brilliant in its varied tints. These headlands are on the Canada side of the river, and are extremely picturesque. At length we neared the town ; for town, alas ! there is, and that much too near the cataract. I had gradually worked myself up to a perfect fever of expectation ; and so intense was my state of excitement, that though this was the moment I had so ardently wished for, I now almost dreaded the accomplish-

ment of my desires. Ah ! if Niagara should disappoint me after all ! I tried to compose my mind, and to look quietly about me, and forget, if possible, what I was about to behold. The town of Niagara is, in fact, nothing but a straggling village ; it contains, however, an infinity of hotels, the principal of which is the ‘Cataract.’ The railway terminus is within a hundred yards of it, so we had not far to walk. To this hotel, then, which is on the way to the falls, we bent our steps, the noise of the rushing waters sounding in our ears, louder and more loud, as we approached them. We passed quickly on, without a guide, (for I could not have supported the presence of one of those human machines,) and arrived at a small grove composed of hiccory trees : this we traversed with rapid footsteps, and so, with a beating heart, I approached Niagara. One sudden turn in the narrow path, and it was before us !—before us in all its tumultuous grandeur and unequalled magnificence ! Do not be afraid, I am not going to inflict upon you a description of the cataract. No ; Niagara has been already too much poetized and prosed about, and as no one single writer has ever yet succeeded in conveying to the mind of another the most remote idea of what it really is, it is, I think, much better not to attempt a description, which must of necessity prove a failure. As far as regards my own sensations, they were over-

powering, and, do not laugh at me for my weakness, but I must confess, that my first view of Niagara was through blinding tears. It was, indeed, a sight never to forget—awe-inspiring, and most overwhelming to the poor weak human mind. I have often asked North American travellers whether the falls answered their expectations. To my surprise (but this was before I found out that it was the fashion to *say* so) many of them have told me that Niagara fell short of *theirs*. My reply to such a question would be, that though it immeasurably surpassed all my previous conceptions, it was totally different from what I had expected to see. The Niagara of my dreams was higher, and not so broad, but infinitely less sublime. I was not prepared for the extent of the Horseshoe Fall, or for the indescribably beautiful *colour* of the mass of water in its descent. The pillar of rising spray is also a feature in the scene, which must completely defy the art of the painter, and so are the brilliant rainbows which glitter across the foaming torrent. Thankful indeed am I, that I have seen Niagara, not (as a travelled young GENTLEMAN once said to me of a Turkish city) because I can say that I have *done* Niagara; but because I trust that as long as memory holds her seat, so long shall I retain the impress of that great and magnificent scene. Now that I have actually beheld the watery ‘giant of the western

world,' I may hope, that in the stillness of night my imaginations will be able to recall the vision of this most wonderful of nature's works; and that I shall again feel, as I did when first I beheld Niagara, that the Mighty Power which gathered the waters in a heap, is mostly to be praised and admired in his works, and that man is indeed weak and insignificant beside them.

Here speaks the voice of God! Let man be dumb,
Nor with his vain aspirings hither come;
That voice impels those hollow-sounding floods,
And like a Presence fills the distant woods;
These groaning rocks the Almighty finger piled
For ages here *His* painted bow has smiled,
Marking the changes and the chance of time—
Eternal, beautiful, serene, sublime.

Not bad *sounding* Yankee lines, you will say, though what the author meant when he composed the last line but one, I cannot guess; and, moreover, I do not think he knows himself.

It was long before I could stir from the spot in which the glories of Niagara had first opened upon us, but at last we *did* move forward, and continued our walk over a long, unsafe-looking bridge, built above tumbling waters, to Goat Island. But few leaves were left on the trees, which grew thickly over the island, but the paths were strewed with them, and the fitful November blast caught them up, and blew them in circling eddies round our feet. It was a day to see Niagara in all its wild

magnificence. The wind bent the tops of the tall trees, and the leafless branches creaked above our heads; but we hailed the stormy sounds with welcome, for they seemed to harmonize with all we saw. We walked round the island, and about it in every direction, and found many views *as fine as* the one we had left. There is literally a waste of waters. The wide river above the falls stretches broadly out between the rival shores, but there is no repose on its bosom, and woe to the boat or living soul that trusts itself on its treacherous surface. The burning of the ship Caroline, during the last war, was described to us by an eye-witness. She was set fire to, and then sent over the falls in a burst of flames. It must, indeed, have been a splendid sight, that of the fierce contention of the rival elements. The strife, however, did not last long; and afterwards, not one morsel of the planks, or even a stick of timber of the doomed vessel, was to be seen, to bear a record of her fate. The force of the cataract had ground her to atoms. After hours of wandering, we at length returned to everyday life, and the Cataract Hotel. Having been told that from this hotel the voice of Niagara was distinctly to be heard, I was rather disappointed to find that this was not always the case; I must tell you, also, that the noise of the waters is greatly overrated, and the distance at which it may be heard much *elongated* in travellers' stories. The

aspect of the entire neighbourhood of the Falls disturbed my ideas of the beautiful and appropriate. I had not only imagined that we should find very little artificial existence around this wondrous place, but that *the* hotel would be the only building *close* to the falls. And what was the reality? We were located in a comfortable hotel, (I should greatly have preferred a wooden shanty,) and this hotel was in a good clean *street*! Imagine my dismay at finding myself in an actual street within a hundred yards of Niagara! Opposite the window of the hotel was the post-office; and the post office was also a Notion shop, and was flanked on one side by Allan, the tailor, and on the other by Quaig, the boot and shoe maker! It is perfectly true that, in the present state of society, and especially in so cold a climate as this, human beings must have it in their power to purchase articles of clothing; and as the Indians are no longer in this part of the world to set the fashion of scanty apparel, the necessity becomes still more imperative; but why could not these (I have no doubt) respectable tradesmen have set up at a more respectful distance, and have spared the magic regions of Niagara the contrast of their unromantic avocations? I had no patience with the utilitarian Yankees, and, at that moment, could have seen a fire break out in the town rather with satisfaction than otherwise.

There are always a few Tuscarora squaws lingering about, with specimens of coarse bead-work for sale. Their dress is very picturesque, but as they speak tolerable English, and are by no means wild or savage looking, I take very little interest in them or their wares. Several of these women carry their '*papoose*' with them, which papoose, when the mother is tired, is placed upright on its board against any house or fence which happens to be near. One little red thing amuses me exceedingly. It is a fat and unwieldy child, of about two years old, which is strapped closely down to the plank, its legs being tightly swathed together in red cloth, so that it has all the appearance of a gigantic carrot, with something slightly resembling a human head on the thick end of it. The only part of its person over which it appears to have any control, is its eyes; and those it rolls about in such a comical manner, that I can never look at the little animal without laughing.

The second day after our arrival, we hired an open carriage, in order to visit some of the principal points of interest on the Niagara river. Our first *lion* was the Whirlpool, which is about three miles below the Falls. It is in the midst of fine scenery, and is what may be called *fearfully* beautiful. A tremendous force of water rushes through a narrow channel—not more I should imagine than from fifty to sixty yards in width, and it flows be-

tween rocks three hundred feet in height. I suppose there are peculiar causes for the *circling* motion of the water, which has caused the name of the 'Whirlpool' to be given to this spot. It foams and whirls, and rends everything which is sucked into its vortex with savage fury; and it is a giddy thing to stand upon the rocks above, and look down upon this watery Pandemonium. We saw huge trees, which had come down the rapids, gradually sucked into the whirlpool, and it was curious to watch the wild manner in which they were tossed and whirled about.

We next visited the 'Devil's Hole,' which is worthy of notice, not only for its individual beauty, (though the name does not promise much,) but owing to its having been the scene of a fearful tragedy during the 'war time.' The guide, who kept a sort of 'liquor shop' by the roadside, and who was far advanced in years, told us 'all about it.' How that a party of defeated Britishers had been hotly pursued by their adversaries, till they arrived at the 'Hole,' and that *there*, not being aware of the nature of the ground, they had perished miserably. The 'Devil's Hole' is a narrow ravine, four hundred feet deep, and opening out into the river. The summit of the rocks were, and still are, so concealed by trees and underwood, that no one can be aware of the proximity of danger, till he finds himself actually on the brink of the awful

precipice. Of the unfortunate Englishmen, who, in their haste to escape, fell over these treacherous rocks, but one, we were told, escaped. This lucky individual was the drummer, who was happy enough to find his fall, by some means or other, broken by his *drum*, and thus his life was saved. He made his escape eventually with great difficulty, skirting the narrow and shelving banks of this formidable stream, and by this means avoided his pursuers.

From a high bank, a little above the 'Devil's Hole,' we obtained a distant view of Lake Ontario, and could even trace the narrow and winding Niagara, till its waters mingled with those of the calm and distant lake. It was a striking image of the quiet and repose of the latter years of life, after the stormy passions of youth have subsided, and the wild tumult of eager hopes and the cares of high ambition have been lulled to rest; when the grief which shook the strong man like a reed shall have passed away; and when, after having been drawn into the fierce whirlpool of the waters of strife, and hurried unresistingly down the maddening torrent, what joy to find himself, at the last, buoyed upon those pleasant waters, and approaching a haven of safety at last!

We devoted another day to an expedition to the Canada, or 'British side,' so it is here called. To descend to the water's edge, there are two hundred and fifty-seven steps. The last three flights are not

(like the upper ones) roofed over, and they are, in consequence, rendered very wet and slippery by the spray from the falls. The weather was, in one respect, very unpropitious. The wind was high, and it blew directly *down* the river, the consequence of which unpleasant state of things was, that we were ferried across in a perfect shower of spray. The sun, however, shone out brightly, and the rainbows were consequently in their most perfect beauty. Though, at first sight, it appears rather a formidable undertaking, to cross the river so immediately below the falls, there is, in fact, little or no danger attending it. Owing to the eddy, the boatmen do not find it very hard work to keep their course; they, however, complained bitterly of the labour, and the lowness of the toll.

On arriving at the Canada side, a carriage (which we had previously ordered from the Clifton Hotel) was in readiness to convey us up the steep, winding road, to the summit of the high rocks which bound the stream. The full view of Niagara is more perfect on the Canada than it is on the American side. The Horse-shoe Fall *belongs* to the former, and is divided from what are called the American Falls by Goat Island. The scenery, however, on the American shore is immeasurably superior to what it is on *our* side, and, moreover, there are a hundred different and lovely views to one on the Canadian bank. I had no wish, there-

fore, to spend more than a couple of days out of the short period of time which we could devote to Niagara at the Clifton Hotel. The point from which the finest view can be obtained of the whole mass of falling water, is from the Clifton Ledge, about one hundred and fifty yards from the hotel. There, the eye can compass the whole—the Horse-shoe and the American Falls in one glance. The background of the picture at this spot is, indeed, beautiful, embellished, as it is, by Goat Island, the rapids, and the distant woods. Still, to my fancy, the actual enjoyment is greater on the American side, for there the variety is delightful ; and, moreover, there are mossy banks to rest on, and comfortable seats, whereon the beauties of the scene may be contemplated without fatigue. The contrast which all this affords to the barren and treeless walks on the Canada side, is as striking as it is pleasing. There is a projecting ledge of table-rock above one of the highest parts of the cataract ; on this ledge is the *shanty*, where travellers write down their names, and chronicle their poetical effusions, for the benefit of posterity. We did not enter the building, having read Dickens's severe, but I have no doubt just, remarks on the nature of the inscriptions therein indited. The rock is evidently breaking away, and at any moment, and without a warning of any sort, the portion that remains may be precipitated into the depths below. Not

six weeks before our visit, there occurred a frightful accident about fifty yards below this spot. A party of Americans from the hotel were viewing the falls, when one of them (a young lady) in stooping to gather a flower which grew at the edge of the rock, lost her balance, and fell over the precipice, which is here about three hundred feet in height. Her mangled form was carried up to the Clifton Hotel, and, strange to say, she continued to breathe for three hours after the accident. My informant, who was an Englishwoman, and had lived twenty-six years in the country, wound up her account by saying, ‘They are so reckless, *them* Americans!’—and so, in truth, they are.

The following day we saw everything that was to be seen within the compass of a drive. The museum, which contains all sorts of inanimate monsters, besides two *living* and very savage buffaloes from the Rocky Mountains; and the ‘burning springs,’ which are objects worthy of great curiosity. After journeying along a very sandy and indifferent road for about three miles, we came to a small wooden building on the brink of the river. This building you approach and enter, being guided in your course by a sulphureous smell, which is anything but agreeable. In the centre of the building you perceive what appears to be a shallow well, the water contained in which rises very nearly to the surface. In the middle of this reservoir is a machine,

resembling nothing so much as an upright *churn*, and through the upper part of this machine projects an iron tube. An attendant damsel, the priestess of the shrine, applies a lucifer match to the orifice of the tube, and forthwith a flame bursts-out, lurid, broad, and fierce ! The attendant then removes the *churn*, sets a light to the *water*, and lo ! the whole surface of the well is as a huge burning mince-pie at Christmas ! Being curious to know how and when these springs were first discovered, we ascertained, that in the commencement of the struggle for independence, some mills which then stood on this spot were burnt, and that, long after every apparent combustible had disappeared, the flames continued to ascend from the place with scarcely diminished activity. This circumstance gave rise to investigation as to the cause of this singular phenomenon, and, eventually, to the discovery of the sulphureous springs beneath.

In the afternoon, we descended, by a spiral staircase, close to the falls, and having arrived at a ledge on a level with the river, we, after walking a few yards, found ourselves at the entrance of that mighty arch formed by the rock and falling water. The roaring of the mighty cataract, and the trembling of the rock on which I stood, combined to render me so nervous, that I was fain to creep back again the few yards I had come, and take shelter in a little shanty which has been erected at the end

of the descent. From this place of refuge, I could contemplate, with a greater feeling of security, the watery tumult which was going on around me. But it was altogether too overpowering, the noise too deafening, and the nervous sense of danger too great, for the situation we were in (in spite of its grandeur and sublimity) to be an agreeable one. Over head was the tottering table-rock on which we had stood, projecting forty or fifty feet over the water *and our heads*. I repeat it was not pleasant, and I was not sorry to say 'Good-bye' to the thundering concert in the Niagara arch. We found so little to amuse or interest us on the Canada side, that we gladly returned to the *United States*. Here our time passed only too rapidly, for we were soon, alas, to take our farewell walk on this island!

It is said that, during the 'season,' from two to three hundred persons daily *pay their shilling* to cross the bridge, which leads to this beautiful island, and enjoy the variety of beautiful walks that are found on it. The property belongs, I believe, to a wealthy family of the name of Porter; and if we may judge by the names which have been carved on the trees and benches, the Browns, Greens, Blacks, and Whites, have been very numerous, and must have proved a fruitful mine of wealth to the proprietor. I was most thankful that their *names* were all I saw of them, and daily

and hourly congratulated myself that we had visited Niagara at a time when the sight-seeing portion of the public are generally content to remain at home. It was to me almost disagreeable to see *any* human habitations on the banks of Niagara. I would have had it one glorious natural temple, dedicated to the God who formed it from the foundation of the world. I do not exactly say that I would wish the speculating Yankees *themselves* to be hurried into the rapids, but the saw-mills and the stores I would gladly see made an offering to the cataract. I *think* I would spare the hotel, but it should be well hid among the trees, and not allowed to show its great glaring white face in the shameless way it does at present.

Brilliantly did the sun sink to rest in this our last evening at Niagara, and brightly, too, did the evening star shine out of the heavens as I watched its twinkle from the balcony of the hotel; but, alas, it glistened over a 'drug store,' and not above the uncleared woods! And now we had to bid adieu to everything at Niagara—to the old baldheaded eagle who watches you from his perch every time you go to the falls—to the tempting 'curiosity shops,' and to the many stores of hickory sticks and articles of Indian workmanship. The last adieus were paid to the cataract itself, and I left the river's banks with a feeling of regret which it would be difficult to describe. In the course of

the ten days we had spent at the falls, I had become so intimate with their beauties, that I had learned to regard that which had at first sight inspired me with awe, with a feeling only of delighted and reverential wonder. I had become familiar with Niagara! And when for the last time I looked upon the face of those mighty waters—when I reflected that for long ages after we poor puny mortals should have ceased to cumber the earth, Niagara would be still pouring down her gushing torrents, even as for thousands of years she had done before,—when I thought upon all this, I felt that the tremendous cataract of Niagara was, indeed, an awful testimony to the omnipotence of the Creator, and that man should tremblingly adore the hand that formed it, and confess that ‘His *power* endureth for ever.’

Great Spirit of the Rushing Waters! Thou art here!
Thy Voice is all around us—and thy Presence near.
Here hast Thou heap’d the waters in a falling Sea,
And bade their thunders roll on everlastingly!

Great Spirit of the Rushing Waters! Trembling came
The low deep murmuring of the Almighty Name,
When first the wild Red Indian, still and awestruck stood
Upon the giddy margin of Niagara’s flood.

Great Spirit of the Rushing Waters! This the cry
Which rose in wondering worship to the sky,
Whilst Echo caught the praise that filled the distant air,
And untaught wanderers *felt* that God was there.

The Indian saw and trembled—But a 'still small VOICE,'
Though heard amidst the thunder, bids a world rejoice;
For His the Bow of Hope that spans the watery cloud,
The Bow no storms can quench, though wintry vapours
shroud.

Sound on Niagara! thy dread and ceaseless roar!
For countless ages yet thy mighty waters pour!
Till Time shall pass away, and Hope's bright Star on high,
Shall set in gleams of Glory o'er the Rock Eternity!

M. C. H.

We leave Niagara to-morrow.

LETTER XIII.

TUSCARORA INDIANS—EMBARK ON LAKE ONTARIO—
HURRICANE — IMMINENT PERIL — RETURN TO
ROCHESTER—A NIGHT AT SYRACUSE—ALBANY.

Albany—November.

THE morning we left the falls, I perceived that there had been a fresh arrival of Indian women during the night; and two of the young squaws were really not at all undeserving of admiration. Very few persons (at least, in America) seem to take any interest in these poor ill-used people; however, the two I mention were women that few (even among those not possessed of my taste for wild specimens of human nature) could have overlooked. They had fine eyes and magnificent figures, and their walk was particularly free and dignified. I watched them from the window as they lounged about, wrapped in the graceful folds of their blankets, and waiting for the arrival of the trains. The Indian women are generally to be seen on the platform of the cars, entreating the passengers (after the fashion of our unauthorized beggars) to purchase their little embroidered pin-cushions and needle-cases. The men of the neighbouring tribes are often much less seen in the

settlements than the women, and when they *do* make their appearance, it is very rarely in *full costume*. About a year ago, however, the inhabitants of the village were, we were told, surprised by the appearance of, at least, twenty Tuscarora Indians, in all the *splendour* of their war-paint, and their national ornaments. Their object in making this inroad was not known, but it was an event so uncommon as to excite considerable interest. Their costumes not unfrequently exhibit specimens of most elaborate workmanship. We saw a dress of this description which had formerly belonged to a Mohawk chief, and which was embroidered with great skill and ingenuity. The man who originally owned this costume had once been a celebrated warrior, and had 'fought for King George' in the American war. As a reward for his services, a medal had been presented to him by the English government, and this testimony to his prowess still hung conspicuously on the breast of the time-worn leathern shirt. His son, now an aged man of some fourscore years, had *lent* this garment to the owner of the curiosity shop where we saw it. He was, though suffering severely from the miseries of poverty, so determined to preserve this precious relic in his family, that he steadfastly refused to part with it, though he had frequently been offered a considerable sum if he would consent to do so.

The Indians (the few at least that remain of these rapidly disappearing people) have of late years become much more moral in their conduct and temperate in their habits than they formerly were; notwithstanding this, the women did not appear to be happy—at least, there never was a trace of anything approaching to mirth in their countenance. It may be, however, that they are only *serious* from habit, and from the dislike of *showing* emotion which prevails more or less among all the Indian tribes. The progress of civilization has gone on so rapidly, almost within view of the northern tribes of Indians, that they are no longer liable to the sudden shocks of amazement that in the south have been known to startle the grave and dignified savage out of his propriety. I certainly should extremely enjoy the introduction of a wild Comanche Indian to the wonders of a locomotive engine, and to put him suddenly on an express train. It would be delightful! Poor Indians! their astonishment will not long be a source of amusement; the Yankees, with their untiring energy, have already joined the Hudson with the Mississippi, and effected a communication by water between the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico. They are even now ‘calculating’ the distance between the Atlantic and the Pacific; and their next project will (I have no doubt) be to construct a railroad from Lake Michigan to the Columbia

River, in the Oregon territory. The plan of this favourite project is even now before Congress. Thus, in a very few years, the southern Indians will, like those of the northern tribes, be 'used up entirely,' and their names will pass away from their happy hunting-grounds for ever.

We hired a carriage to convey us to Lewiston. It was one of those roomy and most wonderful vehicles intended to convey nine persons, and when filled I can imagine the sufferings of those packed into its confined space. Four hours were employed in a journey of not more than twenty miles, and at the end of that time we reached Lewiston, a village on the shores of Lake Ontario. From Lewiston the steamer started which was to convey us to Kingston. Having gone on board at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, we were told that we should reach Kingston by three o'clock the following day. For the first hour or two there seemed every chance of this promise being fulfilled; but alas! we had made but little way when the wind, which was dead a-head, began to freshen, and the captain, greatly to our discomposure, allowed himself to talk of five o'clock instead of *three* as the hour when he *expected* we might hope to arrive at the end of our voyage. The boat was long, narrow, and top-heavy, one of those frail, fine weather boats, with a gorgeous saloon, and weak timbers, only fitted for the calmest and

quietest of summer days. This was to be her last trip for the season, all the other boats having been laid up a full week before. To *us* it soon appeared somewhat more than probable that this would be the last trip the *good* boat would take in *any* season; for when eight bells (midnight) were struck, it blew a perfect hurricane, and our danger was manifest to the most inexperienced eye. No one who has not witnessed them can form any idea of the force of the autumnal and winter hurricanes on these inland seas. The steamer, distressed with the amazing weight of her second *story*, strained, and creaked, and laboured in a most frightful manner; while the decks were deluged with the heavy seas that broke over them, and at every lurch the breaking of crockery, and the rolling about of loose casks added their noise to the general uproar, confusion, and alarm. Besides myself, there was no 'female' on board, excepting the stewardess, and my companion being almost constantly on deck, I was left entirely to my own resources. I soon found it quite impossible to remain in the saloon, for none of the chairs were *lashed*, so I betook myself to what I hoped would remain a tolerably dry seat—namely, a heap of trunks which were piled on the deck. The water, which had free access through the unbulwarked sides of the vessel, frequently came up within a foot of the station I had chosen, and the seas broke

over it frightfully ; but still, though wet to the skin, and anything but comfortable, I had at least the advantage of seeing and hearing what was going on, and that in itself was a great satisfaction.

I soon made up my mind, from the pallid countenances of the captain and mate, that we were in great and imminent danger ; indeed, the former officer, contrary to custom, made no secret of it, and not being (at least apparently) blessed with much presence of mind, the contradictory orders he gave, and his evident ignorance of what was best to be done, were not calculated to raise one's spirits. I even heard him at one time say to the mate, in a voice of great alarm, ' Well, I do say it is *eetarnal* risky going into that harbour to-night ; I'd give something *considerable* that we was safe in.' The next remark I heard was, ' Well, I do expect we'll have an almighty smash against the pier, and no mistake at all. If all the wood war'nt so near gone, darn'd if I wouldn't keep on for Oswego.' Soon after this I heard the second in command put in *his* word, and a highly unsatisfactory word it was : ' Well, cap'em, she do strain awful, and that's a fact ; but she's had a'most enough of it, I reckon, and if I *wause* you, I'd just try and git her in any way.' All this time the hurricane continued to increase in violence, and the seas rose higher in proportion. There was no buoyancy

in our motion—no *lifting* to the seas—the wood was nearly exhausted, and it was evident to all present, that, in some way or other, our dangers must soon terminate. It was now two o'clock, and the darkest November night it was ever my lot to witness. To go forward as long as possible, or to dare the dangers of the harbour at once, was the question, and it was one that it seemed extremely difficult to solve. At last, a gentleman, who had all this time remained perfectly quiet, was aroused, by the imminence of the danger, to exert himself: ‘Gentlemen,’ he said, ‘we are close to the Genessee River, and our only chance is to try and get in there.’ We *may* be dashed to pieces against the pier, but we *must* be drowned if we stay outside, for the boat can’t hold out for another half hour; and, moreover, you have no fuel—so make up your minds. I tell you, however, that I am an officer in the United States navy, and I’ll do my best to take her in, if you’ll trust to me.’ It was a great comfort to know that there was such a calm, sensible person on board, one also who appeared as able as he was willing to act for us in our great emergency.

The captain appeared quite ready to take his advice, and ascended with him to the upper deck. We were now very near the harbour, for occasionally, through the murky darkness of the night, we caught glimpses of the lights at the extremities

of the stone piers which jutted far out into the water. It was *only*, however, at rare intervals, and between the mountainous waves, that we saw the lights, for in general their view was shut out by a watery wall, and there was then nothing to guide the helmsman on his way. There was no one but the steward to whom I could apply for information, as to the amount of danger we were in, for he was generally the only person within call. He was, though very pale himself and ill at ease, still inclined to give me all the comfort he could. He even carried his philanthropy so far as to sit down on the trunk, and endeavour to reassure me. This, however, was early in the night, for as the danger increased, I discovered that he had enough to do to keep up his own spirits, an object he at length succeeded in effecting by the aid of a very potent glass of grog, on the strength of which he even began to wax contemptuous; and in reply to a question of mine, which betrayed my consciousness of danger, he said, in a very disdainful manner, 'Well, I somehow guess, you arn't ever been on Ontario before, so we mustn't blame you if you are just *skeered* a few.' The second officer was very diplomatic in his replies, and committed himself no further than to say, 'Well, we may be *fixed* in twenty minutes, and it's 'tarnal likely we mayn't never be fixed at all.' There were some moments of intense anxiety as we neared the pier, and each

man held his breath, as we were dashing through the narrow entrance to the harbour, for all felt how great was the probability that that moment would be our last. There were but a very few feet to spare between the boat and the pier, as we rolled over on the crest of a monstrous wave into the entrance of the harbour; but those few feet were enough, and at length our perils were over, and we were in smooth water! Thankful indeed were we that our lives were mercifully saved, and cordially did we all shake hands with the skilful officer who had been so mainly instrumental in bringing us in safety through the perils of the storm. How pleasant was the change that a few short moments had wrought in our bodily and mental sensations! After spending hours shivering in the cold night-air, in all the terrible alternations of hope and despair, and with the prospect of shipwreck before our eyes, it was indeed delightful to find ourselves in safety, and in the quiet enjoyment of stationary seats placed round the lighted stove; and with what satisfaction we gathered round to warm ourselves, and talk calmly over the dangers we had run, may easily be conceived.

A common peril certainly makes one acquainted with chance companions in a marvellously short space of time; and I grew more intimate with a stout elderly New-York merchant in one hour, than I should have become in a year of ordinary

acquaintanceship. He was not the first American I had met with who asked questions: but he did it in so very agreeable a manner, and was so quietly acute and quaintly facetious, that I was much pleased with him. As usual, it was quite a matter of wonderment to him that we could be travelling in America with any other object beside that of business. He questioned us of our whereabouts when in our own country, and tried all he could to discover our *real* motive for 'coming over;' thus making it very evident that he could not credit the alleged one. He entertained, however, as many Americans of *his* class do, a great but involuntary respect for independent travelling Englishmen, and he quoted 'the Marquis of Waterford's' yacht the *Gem*, with all a Yankee's overweening respect for rank and riches. When the time approached for our leaving the steamer, he appeared buried in thought, but roused himself to shake hands and bid us 'Good-bye.' His last words, which were evidently the result of his cogitations were characteristic enough. 'Well, Ma'am, I wonder now if your husband, who's got nothing to do but to *spend* his money, is as happy as we Americans, who are busy *making* ours. I doubt he isn't.' And then followed, as usual, the most cordial invitation to make his house our home during our stay at New York, and all the demonstrations of hospitality, which, on the

part of our American brethren, is never an *empty* show.

We were landed into an omnibus at four o'clock in the morning. The vehicle was crowded, the road as bad as could be, and there was not a ray of light to be seen. Our fellow-travellers all agreed, (and most of them appeared to have had much experience in lake voyaging,) that this was the worst weather they had ever known on Ontario: there was an 'intelligent Scotchman' in the carriage, (one of those men who are to be met with whenever there is an *opening* of *any* kind, or in any country,) who obtained great respect by his description of the fearful and far more 'risky' dangers of Lake Michigan, near which he was located. He had his pockets stuffed with specimens of ores from the 'mining districts,' and appeared very anxious to make victims of some of the passengers.

Happily, we had not more than six miles to travel before we arrived at our old quarters in the Eagle Hotel, at Rochester. Our original intention had been, after landing at Kingston, to have gone down the St. Lawrence by another steamer to Montreal and Quebec, and then to return by Lake Champlin and the Saratoga springs to Albany. The experience we had of the lake steamers, and also the reports which reached us that the St. Lawrence boats would, in all probability, have ceased

running, induced us reluctantly to abandon our Canadian tour, and to make our way as quickly as possible to New York. We spent one night only at Syracuse, and the next day found ourselves once more in our comfortable hotel at Albany. Here we learnt that our escape from the dangers of the storm on Lake Ontario was a subject for still greater thankfulness than we had first imagined. Numerous had been the disasters, and immense the loss of life on that awful night: indeed it was said, that of all the vessels that were exposed to the fury of the hurricane, ours was the only one that had weathered the gale in safety.

LETTER XIV.

STEAMING ON THE HUDSON—BEAUTIFUL SCENERY—
DUTCH SETTLEMENTS — WEST POINT — MAJOR
ANDRÉ.

West Point—November.

I WAS very glad (for a time, at least) to bid adieu to railway travelling. I was wearied of its *slow* monotony—its constant delays—and its numerous inconveniences. How we longed for the hastening and comfort giving presence of directors, railway kings, policemen, and a pace of forty miles an hour! It was quite provoking to hear every one repeating, ‘Well, I expect there’s no getting along like this in *your* country;’ and the exclamations of the *ladies* of ‘my!’ and ‘possible!’ when I ventured to tell them that our express trains went at the rate of fifty miles an hour, tried my patience sorely—they evidently thought me such an ‘*everlasting*’ storyteller. We found the steamer in nothing different from the ordinary run of river steam-boats here; of these you have, of course, read so many descriptions that it would be absurd to fill up my letter with another; at the same time, I will briefly suggest, that if you can imagine another story or two

piled on the top of one of the London or Paris 'Floating Baths,' it will assist your fancy well.

The sun rose so mistily that nothing could be seen of the distant prospect. The banks of the river during the first hour were not at all interesting. Numerous rather *cockney*-looking villas were passed, as we literally *rushed* down the stream. Every house seemed built on the same plan, with wooden porticoes and pillars, and was equally destitute of fine woods, or even of ornamental pleasure-grounds. We saw some islands here and there, one of which was pointed out to us as having been the boundary of the old Ranselaer colony. It completely commands the *passage*, and must have been an admirable point of defence against any approach by the river.

The Hudson is, however, even before arriving at the more hilly shores, a fine, wide, handsome river, busy with steamers passing to and fro, and occasionally embellished with banks sloping to the water's edge, and tolerably well wooded. As you advance, you see many houses near the river side, the appearance of which is thoroughly and unmistakably Dutch. In one of these, a substantial-looking red farm-house, flourished, we were told, three young ladies—sisters, who measured, one with another, twenty-one feet in height!! They had been *raised* on the Hudson, and the gentlemen of the neighbourhood seemed very proud of the

existence in their 'State' of these 'dreadful fine gals,' as they called them. The pure Dutch families are rapidly becoming extinct in this part of the country; formerly they were very numerous, but now it is comparatively rare to hear a Dutch name mentioned. As they were the first people who settled in the State of New York, they of course chose for themselves the best land they could find, there being little, however, but what was decidedly poor; still, in the valleys through which the river flows, there is *some* rich land, and in such localities as these you may be certain to find a Dutch family. In the valley of the Mohawk, there is still a large though diminishing colony of these people, and from thence, round to the Katskill Mountains, wherever there is a spot of tolerable ground, their course may be traced. This boasted state of New York seems in many respects deficient in natural advantages: the soil is in most parts so poor, that it does not pay the farmer to raise corn, and labour is so expensive that they cannot afford to improve it. There was a very intelligent New Yorker on board the 'Troy,' holding forth on this subject. 'I've been down lately,' said he, 'a good deal among the farmers buying corn. And to see these young farmers! It's quite a warning. A fine young chap of eighteen or nineteen, without a dollar in his pocket, takes and marries a handsome gal of the same age, and with just as few cents in

her purse as himself. And what happens next? Why, there they are—everlasting slaves, with their noses at the grindstone, worse a deal than *serfs*. Now, if that young feller had only *waited*, and saved his wages for a year or two, he might have bought some fine land *Tennessee-way*, at government price—dollar an acre, and *then* gone back and married the gal if he liked it. 'Tis poor land, and that's a fact, and I a'ant agoing to deny it; but just look at New England—there's land for you! If you stump the world, you won't find such cold inhospitable land as *that* on the face of the tarnation earth. Well, *no* people but those puritans could have done anything with it; and just look what riches there is in that country! But we're getting along, sir—going a-head. No fear of an universal *Yankee*,—whenever there's an operation to be done, you're sure to find a Yankee at the bottom of it——." He was now fairly off on the never-dying subject—the wonders of the U-nited States, so, knowing all that by heart, I left him to his little knot of eager listeners, each of whom was entering heart and soul into the popular theme. I then tried another, and, as I hoped, a quieter part of the vessel, but I had no sooner seated myself on one of the side benches, when a stout gentleman, having unceremoniously placed his chair within a few inches of my face, commenced smoking his cigar, &c., without paying the least

regard to my national prejudices. I was, however, repaid for the annoyance I felt by my extreme amusement at the remark of a very pretty and well dressed young lady, who sat near me. I suppose my countenance expressed my distaste for what was going on, for as I was preparing to change my quarters, she remarked to me, with extreme gravity, 'Well, you do feel considerable like *fighting*, I expect, anyhow.' They were the first and last words she spoke to me, for, after delivering her sentiment, she did not appear to entertain the slightest wish to carry on a conversation so auspiciously begun. Soon, however, the surpassing beauty of the scenery occupied all my attention, and left me none to bestow on petty annoyances.

The weather had now cleared up, and we had a magnificent view of the Katskill Mountains, rising three thousand feet above us, and covered with woods. On the summit we could easily distinguish the hotel, which is a great place of resort for summer tourists, and I longed to be looking down from one of its windows *on* the scene *through* which we were, so far, too rapidly passing. The scenery grew more and more beautiful every moment, and we began to allow to each other that the charms for which the Hudson is so celebrated are not exaggerated by its panegyrists. We passed a very fine-looking *château*, (for that is the best name for it,) built by a Doctor Somebody, whose

name I forget. It has been given the name of Hyde Park. Immediately after passing the 'corner,' and with the name still grating on our ears, we arrived at the little town of Poughkeepsie. This name is a corruption of the Indian word Apokeepsing, which signifies 'safe harbour.' Nothing could now surpass the river in beauty. All the essentials were there—rocks, woods, and water. It was the Rhine without its associations, with no ruins, but with even more of grandeur and variety. The whole was rendered a thousand times more interesting to us by the eventful scenes which had been enacted there in former days, and many of which have been so well and so romantically described by Cooper and Washington Irving. We passed by Milton and Marlborough, and then Newburgh. There, too, was the house still standing, which had so long been the head quarters of Washington. And we viewed it with interest as the spot where the father of his country refused the crown that was offered him, and where he had eventually the happiness of receiving the intelligence that peace was established, and the independence of his country secured.

Soon after leaving Newburgh, we entered the highlands. These hills, or rather mountains, are a range of thirty miles in length and fifteen in width, and extending *across* the river in a north-east and south-westerly direction. On our left, rose the two

highest peaks, one of which is called the 'Great Sachem,' and the other *Anthony's Nose*, rather a bathos, as it appeared to me. Soon after this, we reached West Point. Here we landed, and, after undergoing the usual questioning from the sentry on duty, we were speedily comfortably established in the hotel. The Military College at West Point seems to me to be quite perfection as an establishment of the kind. The cadets are two hundred and fifty in number, and receive instruction in every branch of science; and there can be no doubt that some of the most accomplished and agreeable men in the United States are those who have been educated at the Military College. Their minds become enlarged, and the nature and end of their pursuits make them gentlemen in the best sense of the word, and free them from many of those prejudices so apparent in many of their countrymen. The situation of West Point is calculated to foster any patriotic feelings which the young Americans may possess, as well as to excite within them a love for all that is most beautiful in nature. The loveliness of all they see around them, must surely increase their affection for, and admiration of, their *fatherland*, and surely the feeling cannot be decreased by the knowledge that in the immediate neighbourhood of their academy were enacted some of the most remarkable and glorious events in their early history.

We did not fail to visit both Fort Putman and Fort Clinton, and in Kosciusko's Garden, we sat and read, and mused. Arnold's treachery and the execution of poor André have been the subject of many tales, and romances, and, to my surprise, I found the subject rather a popular one with the Americans. More than once this tragical affair was, in our hearing, alluded to by the Yankees, with considerable self-satisfaction. I could only repeat with Corneille, It is not the *scaffold*, but the *crime* which makes the shame; and certainly, if this be true, the shame should be entirely on the side of the Americans.

LETTER XV.

WASHINGTON IRVING — DINNER ON BOARD THE
STEAMER — ARRIVAL AT NEW YORK — ASTOR
HOUSE — INCONGRUITIES OF BROADWAY — BEAUTY
AND INDEPENDENCE OF THE LADIES.

Newk Yor—November.

ON the afternoon of the second day after our arrival at West Point, we again embarked for New York, and soon came to the conclusion that the Hudson certainly far surpasses in beauty any of our European rivers; with its bold rocky promontories through which the lordly river winds its way, and every now and then its openings into lakes, surrounded by granite rocks, with wooded summits, it stands pre-eminent amongst rivers.

At length, we came to Ferry Town, celebrated for its model prison, but still more for the romantic interest, with which the magic pen of the 'Wizard of the *West*' has invested it. In a pretty situation stands the abode of the enchanter himself, and it was pointed out to us by some of our fellow-passengers, with a pride which I could understand and appreciate.

But it is very difficult to indulge in romance

on board any steamer, and in an American one, almost impossible. In the midst of a reverie, in which I was endeavouring to conjure up the forms of Rip Van Winkle, and the Headless Horseman of Ferry Town, I was roused by a summons to dinner. An appeal of this kind is, on such occasions, not to be neglected; for everything in the shape of comfort depends on being in time. This conviction is, however, so firmly impressed on every one's mind, that the rush to dinner is tremendous, and the exertions to secure the best place most strenuous and determined. The noise occasioned by the hungry multitude effectually broke the spell which the memories connected with one of my favourite authors had woven around me; and instead of those pleasant fancies, I had to content myself with a crowded saloon, a coarse but plentiful dinner, and the immediate companionship of one of the very shortest and stoutest of elderly ladies with whom I ever came in contact. This personage, who was about fifty years of age and extremely loquacious, had clung to me pertinaciously through the day in spite of my efforts to shake her off. She was without a *compagnon de voyage* of any kind, and had she been a degree less stout or less of an age to take care of herself, I should have been touched by her feminine sense of dependence. At dinner, she seated herself by my side, and with well-meant kindness, pushed me with her round elbow, when-

ever anything she considered particularly tempting was placed on the table. Her appetite was prodigious, and I looked on with absolute amazement at the disappearance of the eatables within her reach. Plate after plate was emptied of roast beef, stewed oysters, mutton, and what she called *sarce*. Still the cravings of her appetite seemed but little diminished, for having picked the bones of half a grilled fowl, till not a morsel of meat remained, she sent the unlucky remnants from one side of her plate to the other with a vicious jerk, and muttered, ‘Well, I expect, I can’t make any hand of those bones anyhow!’ After this, she solaced herself with an unlimited quantity of squash pie, which national dish she declared to be an especial favourite of hers. But what surprised me most was the extraordinary dexterity with which she contrived to remove the apples from a dish on the table, to the safe custody of her own pocket handkerchief. I will not pretend to say *how* many apples found their way into her possession; I only counted six, and as she slid from her chair, and waddled after me the moment I left the table, it is but fair to conclude that her depredations went no further, and that this was the extent of her peccadilloes.

There were some very fair faces and graceful figures in that motley crew. Some New York families had been *picked up* at their villas at

Poughkeepsie, and other places on the river, and were returning to the city for 'the season.' Many of these were distingué and unexceptionable in dress, manners, and appearance: ladies, of whose *ladyhood* it would be impossible to doubt. But let them do anything but *speak*, anything but drawl forth their words, and scream out their surprise, and say 'What,' and 'Ay,' and 'Ha aw,' in a lengthened tone, of which it would be impossible to convey an adequate idea. This is a great pity, for the American ladies are often agreeable, and almost always well read; indeed, I have every reason to think that they are as superior to *us* in general knowledge and erudition, as they are in acuteness of observation. All these good gifts are, however, marred by a want of softness of manner, and by a deficiency of those 'good gifts which grace a *gentlewoman*.' The 'guessing' and 'expecting' are also by no means confined to the gentlemen, and the frequent use of those favourite verbs would, in my opinion, spoil the charm of any conversation.

It is highly probable that the Americans (who fancy that they alone speak English with correctness and purity, and that in the old country no one understands his own language at all) may be equally, and as disagreeably struck by some of the conventional terms which *we* are in the habit of using. They pique themselves on their power of 'guessing' the name of the very county in England

in which you had the misfortune to imbibe what *they* consider your peculiar incorrectness in speaking your mother tongue ; for instance, I was once informed by an ‘ officer’s lady,’ that she was ‘ sure I was London raised by my talk.’ After this, when I found myself making use of some term, or form of speech not in general use in America, I have come to the conclusion that those present were of course finding quite as much fault with our English, as we habitually do with theirs.

The lower part of the Hudson is not so picturesque as it is in the neighbourhood of the Highlands ; but the Palisades which extend for twenty miles, nearly to the city of New York, are extremely curious. They take their name from the Columnade Rocks, which form cliffs rising up three or four hundred feet perpendicularly from the water’s edge. We passed along through the dark water, overshadowed with this rocky wall, and close underneath it. It was late in the evening when we arrived at New York, and there was, as usual on such occasions, a tremendous crowd at the landing, which crowd contained a vast number of pick-pockets, officials, and hotel agents ; there were no *idle* people among them—no *desœuvres* spectators, as there would have been in the Old World ; all were occupied in some business of their own—whether innocent or otherwise. We drove directly to the Astor House, and took pos-

session of a delightful suite of apartments looking upon Broadway. It was a gay and exhilarating sight—the open square before the windows, the brilliant gas-light, and a sort of ‘Egyptian Hall’ opposite, through the open windows of which the music of a full brass band was heard playing the most inspiring airs.

There is a great comfort in the attendance of the civil and well-behaved Irish servants who wait on our apartments, and a still greater in the excellent French cooks, who contrive to send us up a dinner every day which would not disgrace the best restaurant in Paris. The constant rattling by of omnibuses and other carriages, and the variety of London-like noises which are constantly to be heard, and to which we had been so long unaccustomed, effectually chased away sleep; and very early on the following day we were glad to escape from our hotel and commence the duty of sight-seeing. The first day we drove over every part of the city, so as to be able to form a tolerably accurate idea of its *locale*. You *may* know, but I will suppose you do not, that New York is built on a long, narrow island, eight or nine miles long. It has the Hudson on the west side, and East River (a continuation of Long Island Sound) on the east. The latter communicates with Long Island Sound, *Hellgate*, a corruption of *Hurlgate*. On the north side, it is separated from the mainland by

Duyvil's Creek. By this and some other names equally *quaint*, it would appear that the sober-minded Dutch had strange fancies for profane names.

The city is built on the southernmost end of the island, and is traversed longitudinally by several streets, of which the principal are Broadway and Bowery. Crossing these again at right angles are numerous others which run from river to river, so that when standing in the centre of the city you have sometimes a view of the shipping on either side. This, however, is not very often the case, the city not being very regularly built, or the streets *always* either broad or straight. How different is the entire aspect of the city from that of Boston! It is less clean, more noisy, and a thousand times more *commercial-looking*. These differences show one the absurdity into which travellers from other countries too often fall—namely, that of condensing the whole *variety* of the States into one sweeping description; whereas, in fact, this great country is composed of as many different *nations* (if one may so call them) as it has different climates within its limits.

Boston and its inhabitants remind one forcibly of a Scotch city, and, when there, one might fancy oneself at Glasgow, and here I could sometimes almost imagine I had been transported to Liverpool. From what we have heard of Philadelphia,

we already believe it to be a sort of Bristol, and Baltimore, I have no doubt, will be the Bordeaux of the west. Broadway is the *fashionable* street of New York, and Bowery the business one. Both of these run through the whole length of the city, and, indeed, to the end of the island, merely changing their names for that of *avenues* when they 'go out of town.' Broadway is certainly, as far as the essential points of length and width go, a handsome street. Still (and it was, perhaps, because my expectations had been extravagantly raised) I was rather disappointed in the appearance of that famous street. The houses are built with little attention to uniformity, and the display in the shop windows is not so remarkable for splendour or beauty as I had expected to find. Every now and then, certainly, you come to a *store* of great magnificence, with its immense panes of plate glass, and its tempting display of finery within; but, unfortunately, there is, in all probability, along side of it a wretched oyster-shop, or worse still, a ten-pin alley. The upper part of the street, when you arrive at about No. 460, is the handsomest, and can even compete with Portland Place in the size of its private houses. *Lower* down in the street, you are too often disgusted by seeing mean and one-storied houses, where such houses should not be, and by shops displaying all varieties of shades in their brick or stone work.

All this takes from the outward merit of Broadway as a street, and renders it difficult for a stranger to agree with the Americans that it is the 'finest in the world,' or, as they affirm, far 'finer than Regent Street' in every sense of the word. The trottoir is occasionally perfect. The *slabs* are often six or eight feet long, and in many of them are inserted tablets of stone, which, on a first view, have very much the effect of tomb-stones; but, on a nearer examination, you may discover on them the name and business of the 'gentleman' before whose store they are placed.

The private carriages are numerous, but they are perfectly plain and destitute of ornament; the attendants, also, are unliveried, so that the passing equipages do not add much to the gaiety or liveliness of the streets. The carriages are mostly of a green or blue, so dark that it might almost be called black. The coachman is generally of a still darker hue, and when this is the case a plain livery is adopted as a mark of servitude. It is not, however, considered in good taste to make any great display of this kind, and when, a short time ago, an American gentleman, who had been long resident in Paris, and had there imbibed some aristocratic ideas, made his appearance in Broadway with two footmen of regulation height behind his carriage, with powdered heads, bouquets, and canes, he met with such unequivocal marks of ridicule and dis-

approbation, that he was soon obliged to content himself with a more simple and less conspicuous equipage. In general, the horses are good, and they would, I have no doubt, look even showy, if they were well 'set up.' This, however, is an operation rarely, if ever, attempted, as *use*, not *show*, is the object of their owners.

A great deal has been said in praise of the 'beauties' who are to be met with in Broadway; indeed, I have heard it asserted, even by Englishmen, that there are more beautiful faces to be seen during a walk through that street than in any other place in the world. One reason for this may be, that there are *more* female faces to be seen; for it is only in American cities that you can see the principal street literally thronged with ladies, and it would indeed be strange if, amongst all these numbers *many* were not to be found possessed of a sufficient degree of attraction to justify these encomiums. In Broadway, during the fashionable period of the day, ladies, in parties of two and three, may be met with every second, and as their complexions are generally good, and their dress, at least, not deficient in *showiness*, their *tout-ensemble* is often sufficiently attractive. The total absence of all appearance of shyness in these perambulating ladies may also partly account for some of the admiration that has been so liberally bestowed upon them; but whatever the cause, they certainly

arrogate to themselves the palm of beauty, and I have not often heard their claim to it disputed. It is, however, equally true that the reign of their charms is as short as it is brilliant. In America, it would be considered absurd to talk of a lady possessing a single attraction after thirty, so accustomed are they in this country to witness the early decline of youth and loveliness. During their daily promenades, the New York ladies are rarely attended by a gentleman, and never by a servant. It is, perhaps, to this remarkable independence of character and habits that they are indebted for the perfect self-possession and total absence of shyness which must be obvious to every one. To many, this would destroy the effect of half the charms they possess; not so, I imagine, with their own countrymen, for I have heard *them* boast of this very characteristic as a proof of the perfect freedom from prejudice on the part of the ladies of their country, and also of their conviction that there was no reason for them to be ‘ashamed of themselves!’

The dress of the New York ladies is generally overdone, gaudy and inappropriate; it is also costly and *extravagant* to the greatest degree—and to spend a large proportion of their husband’s hard-earned gains in the purchase of Parisian finery, seems to be one of their great pleasures. The price of every article of dress is nearly treble what

it is in either London or Paris, and when it is taken into consideration that they *dress* much *more* than it is the custom to do in either of the above capitals, the tremendous drain upon the dollars may be, in some degree, appreciated. Such feathers as I have seen in Broadway!—pink, blue, and red, and floating high in air on the winds of a cold November day. And then the satin gowns, of light and conspicuous colours, and the splendid velvets of every hue—and all this to walk in one of the dirtiest main streets in the world ; the object of their promenade (always excepting the primary one of seeing and being seen) being, in all probability, to cheapen groceries in a huckster's store. But I am obliged to conclude.

LETTER XVI.

ARISTOCRACY IN NEW YORK—EXTREME OSTENTATION — MUSEUM — INORDINATE RESPECT FOR RANK.

New York—November.

I MUST now tell you of a few more of the peculiarities which struck me during a walk in Broadway. One is, that you may here see (what I fancy you can rarely do in any other part of America) young men who are essentially *flâneurs*—idlers, in short, who appear to have nothing to do but to dandify themselves for the sole purpose of displaying their charms in a fashionable walk. I cannot help thinking that the time is not far distant when the universal love of trading and speculation will not be so prevalent in the United States as it has hitherto been. I have an idea, that in most of the other cities of the Union, *idleness* is still looked upon as rather discreditable than otherwise; and that a man who has no ostensible profession is generally held in small estimation. This is not the case *here*. Hundreds of rich merchants, who, having *realized* large fortunes in the south and west, have given up business, are established in

this city. Formerly, those very men would have betaken themselves to Europe, to avoid the reproach of idleness ; now, they can live *here* in perfect comfort, and in the midst of a large circle of friends and acquaintances in similar circumstances. I was surprised to find that they have their *Court Guide* even in New York, and that, for one sixpence, there could be purchased, a ‘true and correct list of all the wealthy citizens and merchants of New York. In this comprehensive volume was to be found, not only their places of abode, but the amount of their fortunes specified ; in this style : Mr. Jonathan —, No. —, Broadway, formerly of Charleston, dry goods merchant—fortune, 200,000 dollars. Their only private ambition seems now to be that of surpassing their neighbours in the extravagance of their entertainments, and in the ostentatious magnificence of their habitations. The constant communication between America and Europe has already worked a great change in the habits and manners of the former country, and there is no doubt that every year the rapidly increasing numbers of the steam-boats will tend to assimilate still more these different portions of the globe.

We heard such constant and such inviting strains from the brass band at the museum opposite the hotel, that one evening we paid a visit to its vaunted wonders. The great objects of curiosity

appeared to be an English dwarf, very little taller than Tom Thumb, and a most vicious-looking orang-outang. There were also some *dried* and hideous Indians, who had been dug out of the Kentucky caves ; and stuffed animals from all parts of the known world. I was much amused by a small collection of wax figures, as large as life, and evidently in humble imitation of those in Madame Tussaud's museum, each of which was in a separate glass case. The first we came to was one Polly Jones, or Smith, I forget which, but she was a distinguished criminal who had figured in the last century ; and next to her, and gazing lovingly in her face, stood, in full uniform, the unbending form of General Jackson, that great man and enlightened statesman, who, in the words of the song, was—

Always ready for action,
Yes, Jackson is de boy ;
America would be widout him
A turbot widout soy !

On his left hand the General was well supported, having Lord Brougham next him, considerably flattered and with his Lord Chancellor's wig on his head. Next in succession came Father Mathew, O'Connell, Sir Robert Peel, Sir James Graham, and the Duke of Wellington. In the centre, which was evidently the place of honour, was Queen Victoria in a splendid glass case, and adorned with

her crown and coronation robes. She looked remarkably well, as she sat on her throne, and extended her sceptre over the subjects of her forefathers. Near the door of the room there hangs, in a most conspicuous place, and framed and glazed, a common-place official announcement, emanating from the Lord Chamberlain's office. It is an object of interest *here*, solely because 'Victoria R.' is written upon it by the hand of the Queen of England.

This reminds me of a description which a New-England gentleman once gave me of his sensations, when, several years before, and during a visit which he made to England, he was presented by the American minister, to William the Fourth. The Yankee was a plain-spoken, independent individual, the last man in the world (as I should have imagined) who would have been awed by such a ceremony. The undue veneration for mere rank 'came out strong,' however, in his case, for, in describing the ceremony, which he did in the most racy manner, he finished by saying—*Well, it's truth, if I never say another word, that my hair stood on end like candles, and that I hadn't a dry thread about me!* This was at the moment of presentation, when, by his own account, his feelings were wound up to a positively painful state of excitement and fear.

The extraordinary respect paid by Americans to

foreigners who possess a title, has always struck me with astonishment. It is a perfect contradiction in their character; for, with the peculiar constitution of their government, their habits of self-dependence, and the almost total absence of any marked difference of grades in their own social life, one would naturally imagine that they would be inclined to consider the 'aristocracy' of less fortunate nations as a sort of necessary evil, peculiar to the corrupt state of government and society, which we must lament in the old world. This may be the case in the abstract, but it cannot be denied, that in individual cases, a *title* always has, and, I fear, ever will, command a respect in the United States far greater than would be its meed in any other part of the world. This is not a *mere* English view of the case, for I have heard the same remark made, and the same weakness regretted, by many intelligent Americans, who have been painfully aware of the ridicule it has often brought upon their countrymen.

LETTER XVII.

FAMILIARITY OF HELPS—IRISH SERVANTS—JEALOUSY
OF THE MOTHER COUNTRY—THE PARK THEATRE
—FREEDOM ALLOWED TO AMERICAN YOUNG LADIES
—THE GREAT RESPECT PAID TO LADIES IN THE
UNITED STATES.

New York—November.

AFTER the unpleasant truths with which I closed my last letter, I feel bound to say, that the intercourse of the Americans with their own countrymen is characterized by a remarkable absence of affectation, and by great kindness and courtesy of manner. *Whoever* an American may happen to meet, and *however* ignorant he may be of his position, or his antecedents, his address, if he *does* address him, is invariably and uniformly polite. In England, we are far too apt to utter in our inmost hearts, the admirable speech of the Spanish satirist—‘ Let me know who you are, that I may measure my civilities according to your deserts.’ *Here* a man is equally civil to the president of the country, and to the Irish *gentleman* who acts as his servant. The fact, of every servant or *help*, if they prefer the name, calling herself a *lady*, and every white man, in the lowest grades of society,

arrogating to himself the title of *gentleman*, goes far to prove the truth of what I have advanced, in regard to their love of affixing what is called a *handle* to their names. They wish to be called by the highest denomination to which in *their* country they can hope to arrive. Hence, too, the extravagant numbers of generals, colonels, and commodores; and the Mrs. *General This*, and Mrs. *Commodore That*, whom you are hourly meeting with. A *title* of any kind, no matter how humble, is considered better than none in the United States.

The absurdity of the people called *helps* is very great. The *help* 'American born,' is not often met with; but they may always be recognised by their extremely independent, not to say impertinent, air, their showy dress and familiar conversation. The *help* has high wages, without which she would not remain an hour in the house, and she stipulates for one or two entire holidays in the week, in default of which privilege she declines to engage herself. An English lady once told me, that she had heard a 'help' announce the arrival of a servant about to be hired into the house, in the following terms—the person she addressed being a fellow-servant. 'Amelia, tell the *woman* in the parlour that there's a *lady* here waiting to speak to her.'

By far the greater proportion of the domestic

servants are Irish, or coloured people; and it would be difficult to say, which are held in the greatest contempt by the free-born citizens of the Union—the white man who voluntarily submits to servitude, or the nigger who is in a manner born to it; for both are considered out of the pale of society. To be called an ‘Irishman’ is almost as great an insult as to be stigmatized as a ‘nigger feller,’ and in a street-row, both appellations are flung off among the combatants with great zest and vigour. But with all this, the weight and power of these noisy gentlemen from the Emerald Isle are very great. During the last elections their influence turned the scale in favour of the Locofocos; they are the most democratic among the democratic, and are always the first to promote any measure likely to produce a war with the old country. It is calculated that, in New York alone, there are fifty thousand persons from the sister isle; each man who has become naturalized has a vote, and this vote is almost invariably given to the radical party. Thus, the Irish in America endeavour to avenge the wrongs of their country, and if they are dangerous people in thralldom and under restraint, they are still more so with power, however limited, in their hands. The feeling against the mother country is, however, not confined to the *lower* orders of Irish in America. I believe the same feeling to exist among many of higher

position and more prosperous fortunes; nor are the English, Scotch, or German settlers exempt from it. It is sad, indeed, when one's foes are those of one's own household.

There are various *sets* among the portion of New York society which may be called aristocratic. The best of these is certainly that, whose members belong to the literary professions, and whose claim to distinction is not derived from their dollars alone. Between those still in business and those who have retired from it, there always appears to be a little jealousy, and this is, of course, fomented by the grand national animosity that undoubtedly exists between the men of the north and the southerners.

New York, as a place of residence, is decidedly expensive. An opinion as to this matter may, in some slight degree, be formed from the prices paid at the hotels. In comparing them with those of either London or Paris, they are considerably dearer than either. I believe this is only the case where the meals are *taken* in a private room, a plan which, in America, is both expensive and unwise, and was relinquished by us, as such, after leaving New York. Firing of all kinds is very dear here, and wood particularly so, being at least double the price that it is in Paris. It is curious to reflect upon the change which a few years (comparatively speaking) have wrought in this respect. How

little did the early settlers imagine, when they were cutting and hewing, and burning the apparently exhaustless forests, that in so short a period their descendants would be paying for (as a luxury) that which caused them such cruel labour to eradicate and destroy ! Anthracite coal is also burned here, and though it is pleasant to the eye, and remarkably free from dust, its ill effects soon become apparent, by causing violent headache, and a feeling of painful oppression. I heard a clever medical man affirm that the burning of this native coal has a very injurious effect on the human system, and that, since its use has become general, apoplexy has increased to an alarming extent.

Among other amusements, we have visited the Park Theatre, to witness the performance of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean, in *Hamlet*. The house, which is a large one, was very badly attended, and altogether my impression was that these English tragedians, so deservedly admired in their own country, did not *take* here ; I confess, I was surprised at this, as *foreign* talent, especially that appertaining to the stage, is generally well appreciated. Of late years, however, I believe there has been a change in this respect, and that very little encouragement is given to *any* theatrical performance at New York, and none whatever to native talent ; in short, it is only when a foreign *star* of magnitude appears on their boards, that

they seem even to remember that there is such a place as a playhouse. Dancing seems to be by far the favourite amusement here ; and as to polking—I believe that in no part of the world has the rage for that violent species of pastime been carried to such an extent as in New York. There is something delightfully *degourdi* in the way they make their arrangements for carrying on their entertainments ; and, (if I was correctly informed,) on these matters the *laisser-aller* of the proceedings must have great charms for the young and gay. When a ball is to be given, it is the young ladies of the house, not the mammas and papas, who invite the guests. *They* are not supposed to be any judges of the *who*, and are only necessary as supplying the means for the entertainment of the society. I believe that this remark is equally applicable to their dinner engagements, and, in short, to all social meetings where the young of both sexes most do congregate.

On the occasion of a ball, it not unfrequently happens that neither fathers nor mothers appear at all, and that the *bidden* consist almost entirely of young unmarried men, and of fair maidens equally juvenile and unshackled. As may well be supposed, the fun is often both ‘fast and furious,’ and quite different from what it would most probably be, were any either elderly or staid people admitted to the festivity. A chaperone, within the

limits of a dancing room, would not be allowed on any consideration, and very few single ladies, after they have passed the age of twenty-five, are considered eligible for admission. Free, and independent as the constitution of their country, are the manners and habits of young American ladies, and so tenacious are they of their glorious rights as free-born citizens, that they are not content even with this exercise of power. One of their most popular amusements is to take a country drive with any young gentleman who may be the favoured admirer for the moment. The vehicle in which this recreation is taken, is a *gig*, and is usually drawn by a high and fast trotting horse, driven at the very top of his speed. The lady, on these occasions, wears her best bonnet and feathers, and the gentleman is sure to be smoking a cigar. The privilege of choosing their own partner for *life*, as well as for a Sunday drive, is generally insisted on by the fair sex, and is, I am told, seldom disputed. The choice (as in other countries) is, I fear, too often made from interested motives; but if it be so, and if a spirit of calculation worthy of their parents, be too frequently apparent, there is more excuse for an American, than for young ladies of other, and less exclusively mercantile countries. They see so little of their husbands, considering him often merely as the medium through which dollars find

their way into the milliners' shops, in exchange for caps and bonnets, that the amount of *money* he gives them is clearly of more consequence to them than anything else. With *them* matrimony is as much a matter of business as an operation in cottons, or railroad shares, is to their parents. It would be quite a pity if, with the capacity possessed by the fair Americans for driving a bargain, the softer feelings were often allowed to interfere and spoil the *operation*. A partner at a ball, who has chanced to receive encouragement as the owner of a *pair* of horses, is speedily discarded for one with *four*, and he, in like manner, must stand aside if the possessor of a still larger stud should chance to present himself. You will, I know, be ready to tell me that this pernicious system is not confined to the Americans, but that all over the world, wherever there is civilization, there will be heartless ambition, and a love of empty show. It is, however, not everywhere that it is all so publicly manifest as in America ; with us, the vice, though, alas ! too well known to exist, is, nevertheless, generally reprobated, and is not allowed to stalk unreproved and *unsatirised*, through our ball rooms and in our streets. In Broadway, (talking of streets,) this peculiarity fully accounted to me for the want of retiring modesty in the countenances and deportments of most of the pretty pedestrians there collected. And what other result can be expected,

when young girls are thus prematurely launched into an independent career? What but hardihood of demeanour and unfeminine ease of manner? They are early thrown into the society of the young of the other sex, without being subjected to any restraint, or being taught that there is a *retenue* of manner which is generally considered as absolutely necessary to ensure respect and consideration in society. No warning whisper from an anxious mother is heard, hinting to them that it is time to *stop*, when gay and girlish spirits may have led them, perchance, to o'erstep the bounds of strict decorum—what wonder, then, that the ‘laugh without any control,’ should be so much too often heard, and that romping giddy girls should become dressy, uncompanionable wives, and negligent and careless mothers. In any other country in the world but this, worse consequences would much more frequently follow this extremely *décousu* manner of acting. It may be that America’s sons are ‘so good or so old,’ that they are not to be tempted by ‘woman,’ whatever they may be by ‘gold;’ or it may be, that they are too busy for mischief to arise; however this may be, it is an undoubted fact that a young and pretty girl may travel alone, with perfect safety, from Maine to Missouri, and will meet with nothing but respect and attention the whole way. I wonder of what other country such a remark could be made, with

any degree of truth. It is my firm conviction that, if ever chivalry and courtesy to women are *entirely* 'laughed away' or banished from *our* part of the world, they will take refuge among the sons of the Union. Whether its stay there will be long, cannot be known—for, strange to say, these are virtues which do not seem to flourish most where cultivation and refinement are at their greatest height.

While descanting on the singular freedom which is allowed to the American ladies, I cannot resist paying my tribute to their strength of mind and energy of purpose, in which qualities they stand certainly pre-eminent. The very character I have been describing will, if necessary, throw aside her silks and satins, and accompany her husband into the half-formed settlements of the far west. There she will endure, without a murmur or word of repining, the toils and dangers, and often sickness attending their new mode of life; and when (as too frequently happens) their husbands are reduced by one unfortunate speculation from wealth and ease, to poverty and privation, then it is that *their* fortitude smoothes the path of misfortune, and *their* courageous exertions lessen the force of the blow. There are also other recollections which crowd upon me while dwelling upon the failings and follies I have been discussing: recollections of gentle feminine friends, and refined and accomplished women, who stand in array before me, and

almost make me regret what I have written to you ; but, whilst I allow that in the United States there are many, very many, to whom the censure does *not* apply, I maintain that they are the exceptions to the rule, and that the impression I received of the American ladies, on my former visit to America, was a just one. The *aristocracy* of American society is too limited to allow of its being quoted as affording any idea of the manners of the community at large.

LETTER XVIII.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS IN NEW YORK—FREQUENCY OF FIRES—CROTON WATER-WORKS—INTOLERANCE TOWARDS THE COLOURED POPULATION—GREAT CIVILITY RECEIVED, AND EXCELLENT ARRANGEMENTS OF THE ASTOR HOUSE.

New York—November.

BY far the pleasantest walk, and in short, the only one I find at all enjoyable, in New York, is called ‘The Battery.’ It is a public garden at the end of Broadway, and occupies the southernmost extremity of the island. The air there is always fresh, and the view interesting; opposite, and on the other side of the Hudson, is New Jersey. To the last mentioned place the huge and gaily painted ferry boats are continually passing to and fro, bearing along the restless and ever moving population of this human hive. Looking across the east river, there is Brooklyn, and seaward again, Staten Island and the entrance to New York bay are before you. There never was a spot so calculated to give one a just idea of the power and importance of a great commercial country; and the vast quantity of shipping, and the constant *movement*, are very striking to a spectator.

There are several fine public buildings in New York, but they are, generally speaking, so badly situated that they produce little or no effect. The 'Exchange,' which is really a noble edifice, and built of dark coloured granite, is in Wall Street, which is, though a wretched, dirty-looking thoroughfare, the 'Lombard Street' of New York. The front of this building is embellished with eighteen columns, in the Ionic style of architecture; each of which columns is said to be thirty-eight feet in height, and to be cut out of one solid block of marble. The Custom House is also in Wall Street, and yields to no other in pretensions, being built after the model of the Parthenon, at Athens, and being withal constructed entirely of white marble. It is a sad pity that these truly magnificent buildings should be blocked up as they are amongst shabby houses, and placed in narrow and obscure streets; they would, in themselves, be an ornament to any city, but here they are, for everything except *useful* purposes, entirely thrown away.

There are many valuable public institutions in and about this great city. Others, far more competent than myself, have so often described them, that I shall refrain from doing so; my object being rather to give you an idea of that which is ever-changing here—vide, the aspect of the country, and of the people who inhabit it, rather than to dwell upon the prisons, institutions, and form of

government: those features, in short, which remain comparatively speaking the same. The frequent recurrence of *fires* here, appeared to me very wonderful *at first*, and it was some time before I grew accustomed to them. They generally took place in the evening, before we had finished dining, and the breaking out of one of these almost *diurnal* illuminations was announced to us, and to the city at large, by the ringing of the bells of all the churches; the next sound that was heard, was that of the fire engines thundering past, and with them there was an immense display of firemen in shining helmets. At first, we thought it necessary to be alarmed at these demonstrations, and we used to spring to the window in great haste to ascertain how near the conflagration was to the hotel; but after witnessing a few of these brilliant '*feux d'artifice*,' we became too much accustomed to them to feel any uneasiness.

You will be inclined to ask why *fires* are so much the fashion in this particular city, and why they are so infinitely more frequent *here* than in any other of the United States. Various reasons for it are assigned by the natives themselves; amongst others, the carelessness and malice of black servants, and the rascality of the owners themselves, who are said to ensure their property to an amount far beyond its value, and then set a light to it. But amongst all the variety of causes alleged, none

amused me so much as the idea that the insurance offices themselves had not unfrequently a finger in the pie. Where this is the case, the property destroyed has, of course, not been insured at all. Fires never occur in the newly settled tracts and infant cities; and why? *Because there are no insurance offices to profit by them.* The last great New York fire took place about a year ago; on that occasion nearly a quarter of the city, (that lying to the south-east,) was consumed by its destructive ravages. It is already almost entirely rebuilt, but here and there the smoke is still to be seen issuing forth from a heap of smouldering ruins.

We devoted a day to the Croton Aqueduct, which is certainly one of the grandest works of the kind ever executed in any country. Its object is, to insure to the city of New York an unlimited supply of pure and wholesome water. The aqueduct commences at the Croton river, fifty miles from the city, and the grand reservoir there, which covers four hundred acres, is at an elevation of one hundred and fifty feet above the level of New York. The water is conveyed *through* hills, and over valleys and rivers, to the great receiving reservoir at York Hill. This reservoir is six miles from the city; it has an area of thirty-five acres, and is twenty feet deep. Two miles nearer the city, at Murray Hill, there is another reservoir, which covers four acres, and is thirty feet deep. From

thence there are large iron pipes, which carry the water into the very centre of the city. The bridge over the Harlem Valley and River is a magnificent structure, and its beauty is enhanced by the charms of the surrounding scenery. Nothing in New York or its neighbourhood excited my admiration half so much as did this great national work. It is so *well* done—no expense spared in its execution, and no petty, and in the end *expensive*, economy allowed to stand in the way of its being brought to perfection. I am told that the expense of constructing these water-works amounted to two millions and a half of pounds sterling.

The churches in New York are decidedly handsome, and great outward respect is paid *to them*, and to all religious observances. In Broadway there is a church about half finished, which promises, as an architectural work, to put to shame all the surrounding buildings. Some of the streets and private houses can well compete with those in the best parts of London, and many of the *mansions* in Broadway are not inferior, either in appearance or extent, to most of those in Belgrave or Grosvenor Square. Union Square can also boast of very fine houses, but they are unfortunately built of red brick, and look very insignificant after the huge granite blocks of Broadway.

There is a most uncomfortable custom prevalent in New York, which is, I suspect, one they have

copied from those few among our French neighbours who have yet to acquire a taste for English comfort. I allude to their habit of setting apart a suite of immense, finely furnished, cold-looking rooms, for the sole purpose of what they call 'receiving in.' The consequence of this plan, of course, is, that there is no appearance of *domestication* in them, and that, when you are ushered into a room decked with the richest ornaments, and furnished in the most luxurious manner, you feel that it has a cold, bare, inhospitable look, and that you would infinitely prefer being in any corner of the house, however small, where you could see a book or a work box, or even a chair which had acquired other habits than the unsocial one of standing with its back against the wall.

The civility of the storekeepers in Broadway is very great, and the *choice* in the 'fancy' and 'dry-good' stores, almost unlimited. Everything *except* goods of American manufacture are to be procured, at a very high rate certainly, for custom house duties are 'considerable expensive;' and as a proof of the high prices paid for necessities of life, I may instance that ladies' (short) French kid gloves are a dollar (about four shillings) the pair, and everything else is in proportion. One of the storekeepers affirmed to us that 'goods of home make are not approved of, and never purchased, even if cheaper and better than the foreign.' This, you

will agree, is extremely unpatriotic, but the ladies (as usual in such cases) are mostly in fault, for not tolerating any bonnets but French ones, or any muslins (though wove out of their own cottons) which have not come direct from the looms of the old country.

In mentioning the physical changes which climate, or other causes to us unknown, have worked in the bodily formation of the Americans, the smallness of their hands and feet must not be forgotten. It is true that the whole race, generally speaking, give one an idea of their having been *whittled* away into the human *laths* which they unquestionably are now. But, whittling or no whittling, the result is, that the ladies (*chaussée* by Jacob and Melnotte) have the most lovely little feet in the world, and white taper fingers equally seductive; while the hands and feet of a great weedy Yankee would seem more compatible with the frames of the diminutive titmice of cockney celebrity.

No public carriages stand for hire in the streets on Sundays—a great proof, you will allow, of the respect paid by all classes of Americans to that day. The churches are very well attended, particularly the Episcopalian, and there is not observable among the congregation so great a disproportion between the show of bonnets and that of *bare heads* as is to be noticed in most of even the *fashionable* churches in *our* world. Young men in America

neither seem ashamed to go to church, nor to behave devoutly and respectfully when there. *Where* the large black population attend divine service I do not exactly know. They *may* be in some obscure corner of the house of God, in some portioned off gallery in the temple dedicated to Him who made all mankind, and whose Son died alike for the white man and the negro. But if they be there, their presence is kept so secret, that it does not annoy the prejudices of the more honoured of the earth, who may say their prayers in peace, and thank God they are not made as *those* men. These poor outcasts of society are neither met with in railroad carriages nor in public rooms; in short, they are, to all intents and purposes, considered as creatures decidedly inferior to a domestic animal, and I feel convinced that the dog that lies upon their hearth meets with more respect than does the despised negro, with a soul to be saved, and human sympathies to be considered. Every one knows—or, at least, ought to know—the story of Boyer, the ex-Prince of Hayti. In case, however, you should be among the latter, I will repeat it for your edification.

Boyer had been making a lengthened stay in Paris, where he had been received as a gentleman and a man of education. He had been a frequent guest at the Tuilleries, and been received on familiar terms at the houses of the foreign ministers. But

why recapitulate *where* he had been, and what description of reception he had met with. He was received *as a gentleman*—what more can I say?—and enjoyed himself in the best society of Paris. An unlucky fancy, however, seized upon Boyer, which was no other than to vary the pleasant monotony of his life by visiting the United States. The idea was no sooner conceived than acted on, and he and his sable suite took passage across the Atlantic, and in due time arrived at New York. In common with every one else who visits this country, he repaired to the ‘City of Hotels,’ the Astor House. When, lo! to his astonishment and dismay, he found the doors of the establishment closed against him and his! *They did not take in Niggers!* The poor Prince next tried to gain admittance to two other hotels, with equally ill success. There was no home in the free(?) city for the black man! At last, a despised liquor shop was pointed out to him, whose owner earned a wretched livelihood by affording nightly shelter to these condemned specimens of the human race; and there the man who was, in civilized Europe, a prince, and, what is a far more distinguished title, a *gentleman*, was glad to lay his head. At the theatre, similar slights and indignities were offered to him. Neither pit nor boxes opened to receive him, and the next day, indignant and disgusted at the manner in which he had been treated, Boyer and

his suite took their departure, and shaking from off his feet the dust of the great republican city, declared that he must go elsewhere, if he hoped to find *freedom*, for that *there it was not*.

The Astor House fully deserves, in every way, the praise so universally bestowed upon it, and its successive proprietors the immense fortunes they have realized. There is more civility and prompt attention within its walls than I have met with in any other hotel I have inhabited. The cuisine, too, is excellent; there are no black servants, and the sherry cobblers are most worthy of commendation. I feel we shall leave new York with great reluctance, and we would willingly prolong our stay, but the autumn is far advanced, and we are warned against delaying our voyage down the rivers; for if cold weather should set in before we are well on our way, masses of ice will be brought down from the upper country, which will materially increase the dangers of the navigation. It is decided, therefore, that we are to take our departure to-morrow. I suppose my next letter will be from Philadelphia.

LETTER XIX.

ARRIVAL AT PHILADELPHIA—RICHNESS AND PROSPERITY OF THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA — WILLIAM PENN—CONDITION OF THE BLACK RACE IN THE FREE STATES — THEATRES AT PHILADELPHIA — WATERWORKS NEAR THE CITY — MODE OF LIVING IN THE HOTELS—LEAVE PHILADELPHIA.

Philadelphia—November.

WE were ten days in New York—not enough, I will allow, to permit us to form a *very* accurate judgment on many of the subjects of which I have been writing to you. I have, however, given you an account of the impressions I received, and you must draw your own conclusions therefrom. The journey to Philadelphia occupied about six hours, of which the first four were performed by railroad. Our way lay through a flat and most uninteresting country, with nothing to break the tedium, or to remark upon in any manner; nor was it improved when we exchanged the ‘cars’ for a steam-boat on the Delaware river. There is no beauty in its banks, no woods, no anything but steam, steam, steam, on whichever side we turned our eyes!

We arrived at the capital of Pennsylvania early in the afternoon, and repaired to 'Jones's Hotel,' in Chestnut-street. It is in a very central situation, and busy and noisy with the constant arriving and departing of guests. I shall find it more easy, I think, to give you an idea of this city than of any other—it is so regularly planned, and so ingeniously laid out. Half the streets are called after fruit trees. Here are *Walnut, Chesnut, Cherry, Mulberry, Spruce, Pine, Sassafras, Vine, Locust, Cedar,* and *Willow*, besides many others, too numerous to mention. *Penn* doubtless found a forest where he afterwards founded his city, but he went further than that fount for the names of his streets.

The streets all run from the Delaware to the Schuylkill, (for the city is built between the two rivers,) and those, again, which cross the former ones at right angles run parallel with the water on either side. The *cross* streets are numbered from *one* to thirteen: impossible to lose one's way in Philadelphia, but very possible, indeed, to grow tired of the *prim* regularity and *quaker*-like sameness of its appearance. The *Friends* themselves are no longer distinguished for extreme simplicity of attire, but though I had been prepared, in some measure, for the neat formality of Philadelphia *generally*, I had not been for the change which has, of late years, taken place in the Quaker costume.

This sect, who form so large a proportion of the population of the city, present no longer to the eye of the spectator respectable brown coats and broad brims, nor do the ladies adhere closely to the demure bonnet and sad-coloured gown, which have so long distinguished the outward woman of the Quaker kind. They are still neat and modest-looking, but I perceived that a little pink bow or a blue flower is occasionally applied, in defiance of all *friendly* rules, and that, too, with a degree of coquetry which by no means lessens the attractions of the pretty Quaker ladies we are constantly meeting in our walks. Take it all together, I am not inclined to quarrel with the city of Philadelphia, for though dull, it looks prosperous, and the absence of noise and bustle is very refreshing, after the surfeit of both which we had experienced at New York.

The cleanliness of the streets is very remarkable ; every morning, the *trottoirs* are pumped over with a hose, when every impurity is removed, and a bright stream of water substituted in its place. I never saw such a display of *caoutchouc* shoes in any place as I have done here, and I wondered why, till the somewhat inconvenient ablution of the pavement convinced me of the great necessity *here* for those useful articles.

Commerce is entirely confined to the quays, which is one of the causes of Philadelphia having a far more aristocratic air than either New York or

Boston. I believe, too, that this look of ' gentlemanly leisure ' is not entirely belied by the habits and pursuits of many of the inhabitants of this city. That they are, many of them, greatly given to intellectual studies is evident, from the number and nature of their scientific institutions, and also from the number of their public schools, and the nature of their charities. In their love for, and encouragement of literature, the *élite* of this city are decidedly *going ahead* fast.

There is no state in the union where greater facilities are afforded for general instruction than in Pennsylvania; but I am told that, notwithstanding this, a vast proportion of the population can neither read nor write. Many of these people still continue to speak their own mother tongue—viz., the Dutch; they are said to be extremely attached to all their own national habits and customs, and they even carry their *bigotry* so far as to pursue precisely the same methods of agriculture which were practised by their benighted forefathers a hundred years ago. I hear it often asserted, by the best authorities, that it is these ignorant and misguided descendants of the Dutch who have gained for the state of Pennsylvania so bad a reputation as far as honesty is concerned. They cannot understand that any personal benefit can accrue to themselves from the loan, and are, therefore, very unwilling to be taxed, in order that

the state may be able to pay the interest of the money borrowed. The high-minded and respectable men in Philadelphia I have found very sensitive on the subject of defalcation, and thoroughly ashamed of the act; they are, consequently, not unwilling to shift the blame from their *own* to any shoulders capable of bearing it; but considering the local advantages of the state of Pennsylvania, nothing can be more perfectly inexcusable than its being amongst the defalters. No difficulty whatever ought to exist in the repayment either of principal or interest.

No state in the union, I should imagine, possesses so much internal wealth, nor are the *natural* advantages of any other to be compared in any respect with those of this favoured state. It has railroads passing through it in every direction, and has also the Atlantic on one side, and Lake Erie and Ontario on the other. It has a rich and productive soil, abundance of iron ore, and inexhaustible mines of coal, both anthracite and bituminous. The public buildings here are very numerous. There are all sorts of literary and scientific institutions, colleges, hospitals, and charities, ‘supported by voluntary contributions.’ Every street has its *banks*, either *solvent*, *insolvent*, or actually *closed*; but reverses of fortune are so frequent in this speculating country, that the threatened or actual failure of a banking-house

excites, comparatively speaking, very little attention.

There are upwards of one hundred churches and chapels, for all persuasions, in Philadelphia. The amount of the population (which is about two hundred and twenty thousand) considered, I should say that there are more public institutions in this city than in any other in the world. Most of them are conducted with singular liberality and skill; and I was particularly struck by the facilities afforded to the labouring classes for improving themselves. Nearly all the public libraries are open to all *degrees* of the people, and many who possess libraries of their own, lend their books out for perusal among their less fortunate and poorer fellow citizens. Public lectures are also frequently given, the admission to which is either gratuitous, or the entrance money so small as to make the benefit accessible to all.

From what I have said, I think you will agree with me, that the northern states in America surpass England in the advantages of education which they provide for what *we* call the 'lower orders.'

The only building in the city, to which any historical recollections are attached, is the *state-house*, or *Independance Hall*, as it is quite as frequently called. Here it was that the declaration of independence was framed on the 4th of July, 1776, and nearly a hundred years after William

Penn founded the city of Philadelphia. Poor Penn! his was, indeed, a life of anxiety and suffering! Throughout his long and exemplary existence, every act of his was dictated by the noblest and most patriotic motives. Posterity judges him more truly than those who gave him up in life 'to the sharpest kind of justice.' *We* honour him now for his untiring zeal in the cause of liberty, and his strenuous efforts to promote the growth of human happiness and prosperity; but during his eventful and chequered life he was again and again imprisoned for 'conscience' sake, and for the uncompromising support of his religious opinions, and, finally, and in his old age, he was thrust into gaol for debt, having ruined himself in the endeavour to establish a new home for freedom.

I understand that when Penn first arrived in this country, there were already as many as three thousand souls in the settlement. These were composed of a motley crew of Dutch, Swedes, Fins, and English, and among them, even in those early days, there were many Quakers. It must have been a source of great regret to the philanthropist, in his latter days, that, notwithstanding all his efforts, he had never been able to effect the abolition of slavery in the colonies. And how? and why? has this freedom (such as it is) been effected at last in the northern states? Has it been from a conviction of the injustice of keeping fellow creatures in

bondage? I answer, *Certainly not*. It was because the discovery was made that free labour in a northern clime is more profitable than that of slaves. When this conviction was forced upon the northern states of the union, the slaves were not even then set free, but were most of them sent off to the south, and sold. The last enactment of the legislature, making free the children born of slaves, put the finishing stroke to the existence of slavery in the north. Thus, in the course of a very few years, its actual and ostensible existence had disappeared.

The black population in the north are *supposed* to have the rights of citizens, and they are allowed by the legislature to have the privilege of voting, sitting on juries, &c. In the city of Philadelphia there are, I believe, nearly fifty thousand free negroes, and I wonder in that number how many have ever ventured to claim any of these rights! From all that I have yet seen of the negro race, both free and in slavery, I confess I feel infinitely more compassion for them in the former state than in the latter. The black slave lives in the enjoyment of many positive advantages, which are denied to the negro race in the *free* states. He is cared for in sickness, treated with less apparent contempt, and, above all, *can* have no ambition; for that first and last infirmity of *most* minds is a sentiment totally unknown to, and incompatible with, his state and condition. Above all, he is *made to*

work; and any one who has seen and watched the degraded state to which idleness, among other causes, has reduced the free negro, must be at once convinced of the great *moral* advantage which the habit and necessity of employment gives to the *working black* over the free negro. It is a well-known fact that, in the north, several of the hospitals for the insane are crowded with these unhappy wretches, who, unused to the blessing of freedom, and with minds totally uncultured, have either rushed into madness through the medium of ardent spirits, or have sunk into idiocy from mere vacuity of mind. As long as the state of feeling and the laws of society close up every opening, by which these despised people might hope to advance themselves in life—and as long as no motive for honourable exertion is held out to them—as long as contempt and obloquy press them down with iron hands, and they are shut out of the pale of decent society—so long, I say, as this is the case, I maintain that the situation even of a ‘field hand’ on a cotton plantation is more enviable than that of the *nominally free black citizen* of the Northern States.

It would be too tedious to enter fully into the arguments which have been brought forward for or against the system that the American government has pursued in regard to the black population. When I began to write to you on this sub-

ject, I intended to have said a good deal, which, on second thoughts, I shall keep till I shall have seen more of the condition of the slaves in the Southern States. Perhaps, after comparing the relative conditions of these poor creatures, and drawing my deductions more from actual observation than from hearsay evidence, I may be able to send you, at a future time, some remarks which may be better worth your attention than I can at present.

I must now return to the amusements of Philadelphia. The theatres are large, numerous, and well built, and they are also better *filled* than they are at New York. We have been to the three *great playhouses*. In the first, which is the Walnut-street theatre, we witnessed the performance of the 'Lady of Lyons.' The principal character was sustained by Murdoch, their own clever tragedian, and one of the few whom the Americans themselves seem to appreciate, and are not ashamed to applaud. His acting is certainly very good; and time, and greater acquaintance with the 'trick of the stage,' will doubtless make it better still. His voice is very fine, and (what is still more rare in this country) he acts with good taste, and without any of that vulgar *rant* which often renders American acting so disagreeable both to the ear and eye. It was worse than feebly supported by the rest of the company; but notwithstanding this disadvantage, the applause was rapturous. Perhaps

this was as much owing to the beauty of language, elegance of composition, and great interest of the play itself, as to the admirable acting of the principal performer. There is somewhat of a levelling spirit running through many of the expressions in the ‘Lady of Lyons,’ which is well calculated to find an echo in the hearts and imaginations of the Americans. I wish I could give you an idea of the rapturous applause which burst spontaneously forth from all parts of the house when Murdoch delivered that beautiful sentiment, ‘An honest man is the gentleman of nature.’ There might not, perhaps, have been a large proportion of *honest men* in that house—and to this opinion the broad fact of American defalcation would, unfortunately, incline one to lean—but still the sentiment charmed them, and I believe, that at the moment it was uttered, they would have been willing to pay both principal and interest to the uttermost farthing.

We were tempted to another theatre by the promise of admirable comic acting on the part of Burton, and of Brougham, the Irish comedian. The play was ‘The Nervous Man,’ and it went off admirably, for the audience thoroughly appreciated the humour of the piece, and the irresistible drollery of the performers called forth prolonged shouts of laughter from every one present. At the Chesnut-street theatre, we saw the ‘Sonnambula.’

It was very badly got up, the principal parts being filled by Mr. and Mrs. S——n, the latter of whom made but a very indifferent *Amina*.

There is a very pretty drive in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia, and, as far as we could judge, there is *only one*: it is to the water-works about three miles from the city, and it appears a very popular promenade with all classes. On the evening we devoted to this expedition, omnibuses, private carriages, and pedestrians, were passing to and fro on the road which leads to the beautiful part of the Schuylkill where the waterworks are to be seen. It was a lovely afternoon, and reminded us of a fine September day in England. There is a large mound, one hundred feet in height, on the summit of which are the reservoirs. On looking down from this mound, we saw the beautiful and silvery Schuylkill winding on into the distance, between sloping lawns and shadowy trees. Immediately beneath us, a cascade, formed by a *weir* in the dammed-up stream, glistened and danced in the sunshine; and on the opposite bank of the river there is a large stone mansion, standing in what appeared to be a well kept and ornamental park. This abode had more the appearance of what, in English road-books, is called a 'gentleman's seat,' than any country-house I had previously seen in America. The river has been made to work some very simple machinery, by which the

supply of water is raised to a level with the reservoir above ; and there is a large and handsome stone building on the high mound, which contains a library and *promenading*-room, and the ground about it is well and judiciously laid out in gardens and pleasure-grounds.

Philadelphia looks well from this commanding position, and some of its best public buildings stand out conspicuously from the mass of houses and streets. Among these buildings, those which struck us with the greatest admiration were the college, the principal hospital, and the prison. The former of these, called Girard's College, will (if it ever *be* finished) form one of the most magnificent edifices in the world. It is built entirely of white marble, and it has, I believe, already cost nearly a million and a half of dollars. This building was commenced about twelve or fifteen years ago, but its progress towards completion is now stopped, on account of some disputes regarding the appropriation of the funds required for this desirable end. Six millions of dollars were bequeathed by a Frenchman, named Stephen Girard, (who was also a citizen of Philadelphia,) for the purpose of establishing a public college in that city. The execution of his benevolent and patriotic intentions was intrusted by his last testament to the city council. What has become of the money seems somewhat of a mystery ; but we could

not help thinking, that if it *be* still forthcoming, and the good people in authority do *not* intend to complete their college, they could not do better than pay their debt to England with the *balance*.

In most American towns, the hotels may be ranked among the most showy, if not among the most beautiful buildings. They are generally of great extent; and that they should be so is very necessary, from the custom, so universally prevalent, of boarding and lodging at these establishments. I cannot help thinking that the mass of the population here, have a more (what we call) respectable look than in any other large city we have sojourned in. There is a greater degree of quiet settled *dignity* in their general appearance, and the more elevating pursuits of many of the Philadelphians render their society more attractive than that of either Boston or New York. Our stay here has been so short, that we are still virtually *strangers* to the few with whom we have chanced to become acquainted; but though short, it has confirmed me in the opinion I had previously formed, that a much fairer judgment of the character and habits of the people may be arrived at, by meeting them in public at their great hotels, and daily ordinaries, than by visiting them at their private abodes. At the hotels, in the principal cities, you have frequent opportunities of seeing

all classes: from the best and highest (viz., richest), to the needy speculator, and the successful adventurer. In these public places of resort, the wealthy Americans appear in their natural character, and free from that restraint under which, in their own homes, and in the presence of strangers, (particularly English ones,) they so often seem to labour.

There have, as yet, been a very few amongst our acquaintance, with whom we became sufficiently intimate, to feel otherwise (when they were receiving us) than that they were playing a part. The ladies' parlour has been a great amusement to me here. Two of the *habitués* were a young lady and gentleman under an engagement of marriage. The loving pair invariably occupied two rocking-chairs, placed exactly opposite to each other. The movement of each was incessant, and did not seem to break the thread of any sentimental discourse, for very little of any kind was carried on. They both seemed gravely intent upon the swaying and soothing motion, which now brought them into close proximity, and the next moment interposed a yard or two of space between their faces. They were by far the most sleepy-looking lovers I ever saw. The rest of the occupants of the room were dotted about the spacious room on similar seats, most of them in a perfect state of idleness, and apparently only intent on getting through the time

between the meals as well as they were able. It is the custom for young engaged couples to have visiting tickets printed, with their respective names engraved on the same cards. They are then tied together with white ribbons, and during these intervals of rocking, the pair sally forth, and leave the tokens of civility at the houses of their mutual friends.

It is a source of regret to us, that we shall have no opportunity of seeing the legislative bodies of this Quaker State. The seat of government is not at Philadelphia, but at Harrisburgh, which is nearly a hundred miles from this place, and quite out of our road. Our week here has passed pleasantly enough, but I cannot say that I leave the formal city with much feeling of regret. My next letter will be, I hope, from Washington.

LETTER XX.

DESCRIPTION OF BALTIMORE—EXCELLENT HOTEL—
 MONUMENT TO WASHINGTON—AMERICAN BOAST-
 ING—CHANCES OF WAR.

Baltimore—November.

A MORE uninteresting road, a more uncomfortable conveyance, or, altogether, a more tiresome journey, I never witnessed than that between Philadelphia and Baltimore. The sun blazed into the cars, which, as I think, I have before told you are *all* windows, and are moreover totally deficient in blinds. The long-bodied carriage was crammed with people, who, one and all, objected to the admission of fresh air, and evidently enjoyed the oppressive heat of a red-hot stove placed in the centre of the carriage. We all left the land conveyance, after about three hours of very impatient endurance on our part, and were hustled on board a sort of covered raft, which was then propelled by steam across the Susquehanna river. Having arrived at the opposite bank, we were again replaced in the cars, which were in waiting on the side. There was a great deal of fierce struggling for places, and much difficulty in obtaining any-

thing like sitting room, and the locomotive snorted slowly on as sleepily as before.

The hotel to which we betook ourselves is 'Barnham's,' and it is some distance from the station. On our way to it, we had an opportunity of seeing something of the city, and were as usual impressed, if not pleasurably, at least *greatly*, by the go-ahead aspect of the streets and people. You will say, that by this time we ought to have become accustomed to this peculiarity of American cities, and such perhaps would be the case, were the country that lies *between* them less like a still unsettled wilderness than it is, for one is not prepared to find a 'Liverpool' so near a half-cleared forest. Baltimore is a maritime city of so much importance, that it may well appear bustling and busy, and we looked with great interest at the forest of slender masts which skirted the quays, and at the innumerable schooners lying close together in the harbour. The sights and sounds of a maritime city are always interesting, but I confess, I should have felt greater pleasure in contemplating the apparent prosperity of the capital of Maryland, if I could have forgotten that we had now entered a slave state, and had left *free* America (comparatively speaking) behind us.

Baltimore is built on a hill, and its cathedral and several handsome monuments are well and conspicuously placed. Perhaps it is owing to the

irregularity of the ground on which the city is built, (which contrasts with the *flatness* of the other large towns we have seen in this country,) that we admire Baltimore, and its handsome buildings so much. The position of the city is altogether fine. It is situated at the mouth of the Patapeseo river, which river forms an estuary on one side of the town, some miles in width, and running into Chesapeake Bay. Many of the streets are large and handsome, and the general use of white marble in the ornamental parts of the houses, gives them a very *rich* appearance. Here, as at New York and Philadelphia, the supply of water for the use and ablution of the town, is abundant, and well arranged. There are a number of beautiful fountains in different parts of the town, some of which have considerable architectural pretensions, and not a few pour forth their crystal streams under the shade of marble temples.

At Barnham's Hotel, which may vie in comfort, and almost in extent with any other in the United States, we have pursued the same course as at Philadelphia—viz., dining and breakfasting at the Ladies' Ordinary. One great difficulty we experience is in the disposing of our servants. They, as English, and what is more considered, *white* attendants, cannot, of course, *mess* with the dark-coloured domestics of the hotel, and we have begun to consider the possession of these necessary evils as one

of the disagreeable circumstances attending American travelling. Their position is neither agreeable to themselves nor to their *masters*, and from its being rather an anomalous one in this country, often gives rise to ludicrous mistakes. It was only yesterday, that I rang the bell for our servant, and on its being replied to by the Irish waiter, I made known my wishes. After a long and evidently puzzled silence, I received the following reply—if reply it could be called—‘Oh, you mean, I expect, the *gentleman* that takes care of you.’ Sometimes it was—‘The gentleman who *goes* with you,’ but never the *servant*. To a well bred and respectful English domestic, such remarks as these, made in the presence of their legitimate employers, must be rather distressing, and of this we had a proof very lately. We were going out in a hired carriage, and after we were seated, the driver (a black man) instead of driving on, after the door was shut, persisted in remaining stationary. At last, he actually dismounted, and re-opening the door, begged our servant to take his place inside. It was with some difficulty that he was dissuaded from his purpose, and induced to drive on.

Baltimore is called by the Americans, ‘The City of Monuments.’ There are as yet so few of these public testimonials in this country to boast of, that Baltimore may well be proud of the *three* which ornament this city. The most remarkable of them

is (as you will say it ought to be) in honour of Washington. It is a Doric column, one hundred and sixty feet in height, and standing on a square pedestal. The height of this pedestal is twenty feet, and on the summit of the column is placed a statue of the great American hero and patriot. The statue is thirteen feet in height, and was executed by *Causici*. This monument is placed in a very conspicuous and commanding position: it being near the highest point of the town, and in an open space.

The memory of Washington is with the Americans a sacred thing: and great cause have they to be proud that it was *to their* country he owed his birth. Amongst liberators and popular idols, Washington may truly be said to stand alone, for of no other man (arrived at so high a pinnacle of fame and power) can it be said that he 'bore his faculties meekly,' and that no other ambition, save that for his country's good, ever found a place within his breast. The main cause, doubtless, of this singularity was, that Washington throughout life was humbly and sincerely religious: hence it follows that refusing to accept the worldly honours, which his admiring and grateful countrymen pressed upon his acceptance, he lived respected and beloved, both in public and in private life, and dying, left behind him an example of the

purest patriotism that history has ever recorded in its pages.

The table-d'hôte at Baltimore is excellent. Unfortunately we are rather too late in the season for the far-famed canvas-back ducks, which, at their proper period, are to be eaten here in the greatest perfection. The rooms are always full, and the ladies extravagantly dressed, and glorying in their 'braverie' of silks and satins, and jewellery. Baltimore is celebrated all over the Union for the beauty of its women: indeed, there is a common saying of the Kentuckians, that the greatest boast of one of these gentlemen is 'to have the surest rifle in his hand, the best horse in his stable, and a Maryland *gal* for his wife.' I conclude, that the 'half-horse, half-alligator' inhabitants of 'old Kentuck' do not object to some of the little peculiarities of the Baltimore young ladies; or, at least, to some of the habits that we noticed among many of those we had the pleasure of seeing at meal-times. I have every wish to make allowances for the singularity of some of their customs, and perhaps it may be partly owing to the melancholy fact, that the number of prongs to the forks (even in the best hotels) is generally limited to *two*, that the fair Americans make such an undue use of their knives at dinner-time. In the course of our travels, it has rarely been our lot

to be indulged with a better description of a feeding machine, than a two-pronged iron fork ; I *have* seen them with *one*, but this is rare, and would almost incline one to envy the chop-sticks of the Celestial Empire, as well as the skill with which they manage to feed themselves with those inconvenient articles of domestic furniture.

To a stranger, accustomed to the greater luxury of silver forks, of wider and more useful dimensions, it is deemed not consistent with feminine grace, to seize a large coarse knife, and thrust it into the mouth, with, peradventure, a huge oyster at the end of it. It matters not that the hand is small and delicate, and the mouth one of the most beautiful in the world ; that they are so, only serves to render the atrocity of the deed more apparent and striking. I cannot altogether justify my American beauties when they lean both their elbows on the dining table ; and gnaw a great lump of bread, which is held firmly in the little white hand, the appendage of one of the aforesaid elbows ; and, lastly, it is impossible *quite* to approve of their system of helping themselves to a *public* dish with a spoon, just come off *particular service*. ‘ Well, I guess, I’m tired some!’ said one of these pretty young ladies, throwing herself almost at full length in a lounging chair. It was immediately after dinner, and she appeared fatigued with the *exertions* of the repast. ‘ Well, I

guess, I'm tired some. A-arnt you?' addressing herself to another damsel, in a sky-blue silk dress, and the very prettiest foot I ever saw, but who had just startled me by seating herself with a heavy *flump*, and with a yawn most audible and expressive: 'Well, I expect, I am,' was the reply. 'I feel like sleeping, and can't say that I am not quite bowled out.' Oh, that yawn! and that dreadful nasal twang! I felt, then, how almost impossible it was to admire either the nose or lips, from which issued such sounds of 'dreadful note.'

Our stay here will unfortunately be too short to allow us to avail ourselves of any of the letters of introduction which we had been compelled to receive. Perhaps, however, it is better as it is. Had we done so, our opinions might have been biased by the refinement and good breeding of the *few*, and I might not have written you so veracious and unprejudiced a description of the *mass*.

I have made one observation since we came to America, of the truth of which I become more and more convinced as we journey onwards. It is this—that, with all their faults, the Americans—great praise to them—are not *bores*. If I were to be questioned as to my private opinion on this subject, I should say, that the animal, as an indigenous one, is unknown, and has never existed in this country. In this respect, I think, that even justice has never been done to our Transatlantic *cousins*. The cause

of this (I am, as you know, very fond of seeking for original reasons) may be that *time* is essentially *money* to them ; and that, being well convinced of this truth, they find it far too valuable to waste by bestowing their tediousness on their neighbours. I doubt, however, whether the Americans (even had they the time and inclination) have as much tediousness to bestow as we English have. If at a public table you chance to pick up some stray words of an American's conversation, you will generally find in them both strength and spirit, and almost always originality. On the other hand, if (as is often the case, even here) you happen to fall in with a prosy, tiresome talker, dwelling heavily on uninteresting trifles, or handling really important matters with the dull monotony of a small mind, a hundred to one the man is an Englishman. The state of *our* society is decidedly favourable, by its quenchings of all originality of thought and action, to the rapid growth and increase of the race of Bores.

The mania for asking questions is certainly here sometimes rather troublesome ; but whatever your replies may be, they are almost sure to elicit in return some quaint and original remark, which, if not actually *smart*, has at least the merit of being ridiculous, and will therefore, nine times out of ten, (I mean, of course, if the traveller is the least

capable 'de saisir le ridicule,') be a source of infinitely more amusement than annoyance.

Another class of beings which the Americans are justly proud of *not* possessing is that to which belongs the *hard*, heartless fine lady of the old world. The mother, *scheming* in bold and clever diplomacy for the marriage of a portionless daughter, cringing to and flattering those from whom she can gain any importance and enjoyment, but trampling ruthlessly on the feelings of all others; setting herself up as a model of good breeding, and yet, to those possessed of *really* refined minds, rendering herself to the last degree ridiculous by her overbearing manners, and the meanness of her aims and ends. With the descriptions of such characters as these, the pages of our English novels (which all find their way to the States) are constantly filled; and of all the varieties of our countrywomen, it is the one which most puzzles and disgusts the Americans. Such a woman is, they aver, (and certainly with some degree of truth,) *vulgar* in heart and soul, much more so, according to their ideas, than the knife-using females I have described; and such a woman is, I believe, almost unknown out of England. Thank God! the class, even there, is not a large one. It is one engendered by a state of Society most evil and pernicious, and in which heart and *sound* sense

have no place. The time *may* come, when the Americans, too, may have their dreadful dowagers, and their unfeeling and coarse-minded worldly women. As civilization increases, such baleful consequences may, and I fear must, ensue ; but even when they *do* become *rife* in America, I have no doubt that there will always be a majority of the people in the country possessed of a sufficient value for what is *genuine* and original, to echo the sentiment I once heard expressed by a plain-spoken, but very sensible and gentlemanlike American, that ‘he would greatly prefer the companionship of a well-behaved Indian squaw to that of one of those fashionable and strong-hearted ladies.’

I have already remarked upon the very great *general* improvement which has of late years been observable in the manners and habits of the Americans. Of course, I can only draw my comparisons from the descriptions given by former travellers, who, only a few years ago, gave a very different account of them from what they merit now. Nowhere is this improvement more apparent than in their conduct at the theatres. The Americans are now particularly well behaved on these occasions, and I should say that there is less noise, and less disagreeable vociferation, during a theatrical performance, than there is in any other country where the drama is at all a popular amusement. Their

national pastimes of smoking, chewing, and its filthy consequences, are never indulged in on these public occasions—at least, I can answer for the latter practice not being indulged in, in the boxes. Of late years, also, it would appear that their nether limbs have been under much better command than was formerly the case ; indeed, in the Northern States, I have only once noticed a *leg* in an eccentric position — but that was certainly a *very* strange one, for it was hanging out of the window of a railway carriage !

The Americans have shown their usual sagacity and foresight in establishing the seat of government at a distance from the most populous city in the State. In Maryland, it is in Annapolis—a town thirty miles distant from this place. A large proportion of the inhabitants of this state are still Roman-catholics : the tract of land comprised in Maryland was originally granted to Lord Baltimore in the reign of James the First, as a place of refuge for the persecuted followers of the Romish faith. The state of Pennsylvania being, in like manner, bestowed as a place of safety to the *dissenters*, the boundaries between the two states were a cause of dispute for nearly fifty years.

I must not forget to describe to you the *other two* monuments which have contributed their share towards earning for the city of Baltimore its particular *sobriquet*. They are both erected in memory of the

same event—namely, the unsuccessful attack made upon Baltimore, in 1814, by General Ross. One of them is called ‘Battle Monument’—and it must, by the bye, (if intended to honour *anything*) be to commemorate the *loss* of the battle by the Americans, if battle it might be called, which seems to me rather questionable. The other monument is named after General Armistead, who certainly merited the honour by the gallant defence he made in Fort Henry, having held out for twenty-four hours during a heavy bombardment from the English ships. Fort Henry is about two miles below the town, at a point which commands the river. There is a large and handsome catholic cathedral here, which is built in the form of a Greek cross, and has a dome, the diameter of which is about seventy feet. This cathedral is considered the finest building of the kind in the United States, and, indeed, it is almost the only one. There is a gallery in it which is appropriated to the ‘people of coloured blood.’ This is considered remarkably *liberal*, and is a boon which would not, in all probability, have been recorded in a free state.

There are several pictures in the cathedral, two of which the inhabitants are very proud of. One of these pictures represents the Descent from the Cross, and was presented by Louis the Sixteenth. The subject of the other is ‘St. Louis before Tunis,’ and was

the gift of Charles the Tenth. Neither of these pictures would be thought worthy of admiration in Europe, but here they are considered *chef-d'œuvres*. The new Unitarian Church is a fine building; the hospital, too, is large, and stands contiguous to a spacious and well-filled graveyard. This, though no doubt 'mighty convenient,' as an Irishman would say, must be, I think, rather depressing to the spirits of the unfortunate invalids. It is said that Baltimore is the most violently democratic city in the Union, and that the prevailing wish is for 'war to the knife' with England. I believe, however, that it is principally those who have nothing to *lose* who indulge in these insane aspirations. But this class are, alas! in the great majority, and they are also the most powerful, strengthened, as they are, by the numbers of discontented English and Irish emigrants who overrun the country. No one looks *poor* at Baltimore, nor have we seen a single mendicant in the town. Beggars are rare everywhere in America—but I remember that we *did* see a very few in the streets of Philadelphia. This may be partly owing to the number of charitable institutions, and to the extent to which private benevolence is carried, for there is almost an inducement held out to idleness in Philadelphia.

Is it not true that some of *our* most remarkable, and often our most picturesque buildings, are the 'parish unions,' where, in the workhouse 'homes of

England,' may be daily witnessed the sad and 'slow starvation of the poor.' Long may it be, before such a refuge (however pleasant its exterior) be needed in *this* country! Yes, even though emigrant ships from over-populated England, and from starving and miserable Ireland, pour in their thousands upon thousands, centuries must elapse before the wildernesses and prairies of the New World are constrained to cry to those who seek in them a refuge and a home, 'Hold, enough!' 'for we have no more room for you.'

But I must return to the *war mania*, which, among the poorer classes, is now raging in this state. It is very evident that the better informed and more influential portion of the community are perfectly aware of the impolicy of coming to extremities with Great Britain, either on the subject of Oregon, or on any other. But though I admit that the well educated, and moderate men, are averse to a war, I cannot quite allow that even *they* are capable of carrying their moderation quite so far as to abstain from boasting of what they could and would do in the event of actual hostilities being commenced with the mother country. There is (it would appear) nothing too wonderful or miraculous for American valour to perform. Was not General Scott '*thee* greatest general from *Ayehillees* right down to *Mu-ratt*?' and 'Wasn't it true that the Britishers whipt all the world, and

that they whipt the Britishers?' Verily, they would rival Xerxes, whip the Atlantic, and challenge the Alleghanies. The idea of the possibility of their being worsted in the conflict never seemed to enter their heads. It is a pity that they should indulge so much in boasting and hyperbole; for it is generally the coward and the bully only who are guilty of these sins against good taste. No one can deny the claim of the Americans to a degree of personal courage bordering on recklessness, and to a carelessness of life, which is in itself a proof of the greatest physical bravery. Least of all should *we* fall into the error of despising those as foes who come of the same race as ourselves. There can be no doubt that it is better for both countries to remain friends, than to seek for causes of enmity with each other. To-morrow we take our departure, so I shall close this long letter.

LETTER XXI.

ARRIVAL AT WASHINGTON—DESCRIPTION OF THE
 ‘WHITE HOUSE’ — RAPID GO-AHEADISM IN
 AMERICA—LORD BYRON’S PROPHECY ON THE
 FUTURE POWER OF THE UNITED STATES.

Baltimore—November.

WE had a good deal of discussion between ourselves, as to whether or not we should take a look at Washington, before we crossed the Alleghanies on our route to the south. We at length decided, that as the journey thither, from Baltimore, would not occupy more than three or four hours, it would be more satisfactory to take a peep of ‘the city of magnificent distances,’ as it has been called, before proceeding further southward.

We left Baltimore after dinner, and did not arrive at Washington till late at night. The latter part of the journey (for we saw it by daylight on our return) is through a hilly country, covered for the most part with stunted trees, and copse woods. Congress was not sitting, so the empty town looked more than half deserted. It is always described by the Americans themselves as a dull place, and I have generally remarked, that it is an

unpopular one with them. This is owing, I think, to that very want which made its aspect particularly agreeable to us—namely, the absence of all show of business and commerce. I could hardly fancy we were in an American city: everything looked so ‘melancholy and gentlemanlike.’ The streets were wide and airy, and evidently laid out with an eye to *beauty*, as well as to convenience. We could have imagined ourselves in some English watering-place *out of season*, and deserted by its usual frequenters. Of course, we went to see the capital, though it was for the moment devoid of the interest which the actual sitting of congress must lend to it. The position of the capital is very fine; and the magnificent white stone building overlooks the city and the adjoining country.

The details of the little we saw, on this short visit of a few hours, I shall keep till our return from the Southern States, when it is our purpose to make a longer stay at the seat of government. The *exteriors* of the ‘Treasury,’ ‘Patent Office,’ and ‘Post Office,’ were all very handsome. The latter is built of white marble. The President’s house, ‘The White House,’ as it is called, is as unpretending in appearance as its name, being a formal-looking mansion, of very moderate dimensions. The President himself not being at home, we went through the reception rooms, a ceremony which does not occupy a long space of time, as

they are neither numerous, nor, excepting one, of very considerable size. They consist of three comfortable apartments *en suite*, all of which are comparatively small, when contrasted with the *large* drawing-room, the dimensions of which are eighty-four feet by forty-four. The rooms are well, and sufficiently, but quite plainly furnished, and almost everything they contain is of American manufacture. The carpet, which is a very handsome one, the mirrors, and a piano-forte, beautifully finished, were all, we ascertained, made *at home*. It is rather mortifying to the self-love of an English person to be obliged to acknowledge that the Americans are beginning to rival us in the production of these, and many others of the luxuries of life. The porter at the 'White House' was a very civil Irishman, who gave us all the information in his power, and certainly mentioned, with some degree of exultation, that the annual *allowance* of the President of the United States is less than that which the minister of Her Britannic Majesty receives for his diplomatic services at Washington. We concluded that the Irish porter had not been long enough in the country, or in his official situation, to have divested himself of all patriotic feelings, or of all sensation of pride in the riches and liberality of the government under which he had formerly flourished—I beg his pardon, perhaps I ought to say, starved. Nor had he, as yet, acquired the

democratic habits of endeavouring to prove, by kicking up his legs, or keeping on his hat in our presence, and other acts of incivility, that he thought it degrading to a *free* man to be respectful and attentive; and that he need not be there 'at all, at all,' if he did not happen to like it.

Yesterday, we returned to this place, eager to set forth on our route across the Alleghany Mountains. Where my next letter to you will be written from, I cannot say—perhaps from the shores of *la belle rivière*, the beautiful Ohio; but wherever our next halt may be, I am prepared to find interest in it, and about it. The idea is very prevalent in England, that America is, in most respects, *not* an interesting country; this may be from its want of historical associations, but the true cause of the prepossession arises, I am convinced, from the jealous dislike to the Americans themselves, which is entertained by too many of our countrymen.

Every account of America is received through the medium of a mental vision distorted by prejudice and *fancied* contempt. That we *really* despise the country which is beginning to be such a mighty rival to our own, is impossible, and that we *do not*, is proved by our jealous watchfulness of all her movements, and by the sensitive manner in which we receive any tokens of her increasing power and wealth.

So great and rapid are the almost daily advances made by the Americans in their onward march towards internal civilization, and national greatness and power, that it requires much less of a prophet's eye than it did, ten, or even five years ago, to foresee, in some degree, to what a pitch of prosperity the United States will ere long arrive. It is curious to look back to the prophetic words, which, some thirty years since, were traced by the pen of a man, who, however remarkable for the wild flights of his genius, was at the same time occasionally capable of folding up his pinions, and bringing down his thoughts, with all a politician's wisdom, to the public events going on around him. *Byron* has foretold a brilliant destiny for America. His prejudices were, however, so decidedly in favour of liberty, and his respect so avowedly great for 'the people who acquired their freedom by their firmness without excess,' that one feels inclined to disagree somewhat with the impetuous poet, when we find him delivering such an opinion as the following:—'In a century or two, the New English and Spanish Atlantides, will be *masters of the old countries*, as Greece and Europe overcame their mother Asia in the older or earlier ages.' *Byron* may have made a true *guess*, but it is not pleasant to admit either the possibility of our own downfall, or the idea of America rising triumphant on our ashes. At any rate, let us be thankful that so

melancholy a consummation is not likely to be in *our* lifetime, and that the sad spectacle of 'a world o'erthrown' will not (though it *may* be shaken to its centre) be one which either you or I will live to deplore.* In the meantime, farewell, and expect a *voice* from the other side of the Alleghany in my next letter.

* Since these letters were written, I have looked into Captain Marryatt's amusing American Diary, and as the following extract may be interesting as a *pendant* to Lord Byron's prophecy, I have transcribed it here :—

'America is a wonderful country, endowed by the Omnipotent with natural advantages which no other can boast of; and the mind can hardly calculate upon the degree of perfection and power to which, whether the states are eventually separated or not, it may in the course of two centuries arrive. At present all is energy and enterprise; everything is in a rapid state of transition, but of rapid improvement—so rapid, indeed, that those who would describe America now, would have to correct all in the short space of ten years; for ten years in America is almost equal to a century in the old continent. Now, you may pass through a wild forest, where the elk browses and the panther howls; in ten years, that very forest, with its denizens, will, most likely, have disappeared, and in their place you will find towns, with thousands of inhabitants, with arts, manufactures, and machinery all in full activity.'

LETTER XXII.

RETURN TO BALTIMORE—DEPARTURE FOR CUMBERLAND—SCENERY OF THE POTOMAC RIVER—EXCLUSIVE EXTRA—SCENERY OF THE ALLEGHANY MOUNTAINS—HEALTHY APPEARANCE OF THE INHABITANTS—A DINNER IN A MOUNTAIN HAMLET—ARRIVAL AT SMITHFIELD—BEAUTIFUL VILLAGES—IRISH LABOURERS—ARRIVAL AT UNION TOWN—AN INDIGNANT ‘BRITISHER’—BRADDOCK’S FIELD—ARRIVAL AT BROWNSVILLE.

Brownsville—November.

THE day after our return to Baltimore from Washington, we ‘took the rail’ for Cumberland, a town at the foot of the Alleghany Mountains. About noon we arrived at Harper’s Ferry, which is situated at the confluence of the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers. Its situation is beautiful in the extreme, and was rendered still more so, by the bright autumn sun that gleamed down upon it, and glanced across the impetuous torrent which was the principal object of our admiration. This mountain-stream has forced its way through the blue ridge, the precipitous banks of which rise twelve hundred feet above its waters. Wherever we turned our eyes, wooded hills, interspersed with

monstrous masses of dark rock met our eyes, and (as one of the most lovely of *Nature's* works we had ever gazed upon) formed a striking contrast to the stationary line of railway cars stretching before the doors of the several hotels, and sending forth from their engines short and asthmatic puffs of smoke.

Within the hotels there was a loud and universal clamour for food. But a short time was allowed for dinner, and this, though no very great misfortune to the Americans, who seemed formed by nature to keep pace with the powers of steam in the matter of eating, is a considerable one to the hungry *humans* from any other country. The *tough* beef-steaks form also with us a serious impediment to the rapid deglutition of dinner generally, while to these people it seems to be much the same whether they are eating an egg, or an oyster, or a piece of beef as hard as if cut from an aged buffalo. Sometimes, indeed, they eat the above-mentioned delicacies altogether and from the same plate, and this, taken in conjunction with the glass of milk, (which I have so often mentioned,) I consider one of the most wonderful gastronomic feats it was ever my good fortune to see.

After re-entering the cars, which we did at the conclusion of this hurried and rather unsatisfactory meal, we traversed some beautiful scenery, the road, for a long distance, skirting the shores of

the lovely Potomac River; we wound about its banks for many miles, and so *slowly*, considering that we were impelled by steam, that we had full opportunity to admire its beauties. Still, though going *only* at the rate of twenty miles an hour, it was rather alarming to rattle round the sharp projecting blocks of granite, and that so closely, that at times there was not more than six inches between our windows and the rocky walls. In American engineering, it is not thought at all necessary that railroads should be made on anything resembling a straight line, and it was really surprising to see our long line of carriages continued to follow round the sharp turns which the road frequently took.

In the evening, and after it grew dark, some unaccountable movement took place, which was, of course, followed by a succession of feminine screams. We were then given to understand that the train had run off the lines: happily it was speedily stopped, and no accident happened, but the mere fact of *having been* in danger was quite enough to render many of the ladies incapable of any exertion beyond that required for *kicking* and screaming. There was some difficulty in getting the door open, and in extracting the crowded and panic-stricken passengers. Luckily, we were not more than a mile from the town, and as the weather

was fine and dry, we walked on to our destination without much fatigue or inconvenience.

We only spent one night at Cumberland, nor did there seem much temptation to prolong our stay, even had we been willing or able to do so. In point of situation, however, it has everything to attract, both in regard to eligibility and beauty. It is on the north bank of the Potomac River, and as the railroad passes through the town, and also the Chesapeake and the Ohio Canal, there is every reason to suppose that it will rival in rapidity of growth any of the other mushroom-like cities of the Union.

We hired a huge coach, here called an 'extra,' to convey us, on the morning following our arrival at Cumberland, across the Alleghany Mountains to Brownsville. The carriage was capable of carrying nine persons in its interior: a moveable board being arranged across the centre, with a broad leather band to support the back of those who, in public carriages, are unfortunate enough to form the middle part of this human sandwich. When a carriage of this description is engaged for a private party, it is dignified by the name of an "exclusive extra," the centre seat is removed, and you make yourself as comfortable as circumstances, and plenty of room, will admit of. *Space*, however, which in general, where travelling is such a great desideratum, is not altogether free from its

attendant evils in an 'exclusive extra.' But of this *anon*. The plan we were pursuing is one very rarely adopted in this country. The public stage is the usual mode of conveyance, for the Americans are too little susceptible of petty annoyances, and not sufficiently alive to the delicacies of life, to find a carriage crowded with promiscuous company at all disagreeable, or to be willing to pay their dollars for empty places. On hiring a carriage, you must of course make up your mind to pay for the whole *nine* whom it *might* be made to contain, otherwise you are liable at any moment to have a stranger thrust into the vehicle.

We set off on a lovely morning: there was a *crisp* and almost wintry feeling in the air, but the sun shone brightly, and the fresh breeze came wooingly down from the mountains, as if to bid us hasten up and enjoy it.

During the first three hours of our journey, we gradually ascended the whole way. We looked back occasionally from our leathern 'conveniency,' and gazed upon the glorious country which was lying far beneath us. There was also great and varied beauty in the forest scene around; *firs* of several species were the prevailing trees, but there were very many fine oaks and cedars, and, in short, more kinds than I can specify, while a thick undergrowth of rhododendrons and azalias made it look, in many places, like an English 'American

garden.' Here and there, we peered up dark and gloomy ravines, the farthest of which were lost in obscurity, and appeared to be intended by nature for what they probably were—namely, the favourite haunts of wolves and bears.

We were constantly accosted by pedestrians, who requested a *lift* in our conveyance, and to do them only justice, they invariably offered us a fair remuneration for the service they demanded. The same reply was always made by our driver. 'Well, I tell you it can't be fixed, any way. I've sold myself, body and soul, for the time being, to the Britishers inside, and they say they won't have no strangers in, so there's no use trying it on.' The remonstrance and denial of the 'gentleman' who was conducting us evidently excited no little astonishment, for the burden of their grumbling replies always was, 'But what on airth can the strangers want nine places for, when they can't any way take up more than four? What everlasting fools them Britishers are!'

The carriage was very light, considering its size, and it had wide *leather* springs, the only kind capable of supporting the violent shocks caused by the extreme badness of the road, with any degree of ease or comfort to the traveller. The unwieldy vehicle had a scarlet body, which was painted as fantastically as that of a red Indian, and on the panels were splendid and fanciful designs, of every

colour of the rainbow. Our 'team' consisted of four neat little, thorough-bred horses, who went at a great pace *up* the hills, but were allowed to take their own time in descending. The road, as I said before, was in a most wretched state—full of holes, deep ruts, and large stones, and, moreover, there is scarcely ever any level ground, hill succeeding hill in rapid succession. On either side there are frequently deep ravines, close to which the road passes, nor is there any fence between it and those frightful precipices. Fatal accidents are constantly occurring in these places, owing to the restiveness of horses, or to the carelessness, and almost proverbial recklessness of the stage drivers.

The comparative *emptiness* of our extensive vehicle had one manifest inconvenience—namely, that it greatly increased the difficulty of keeping ourselves in our places. It was impossible, for one moment, to lose sight of the absolute necessity for holding on, without being punished for our temporary negligence in a most signal manner. The great object was to prevent our heads coming in contact with the roof of the carriage, when any particularly violent jolt threw us with merciless force into the air. It was difficult to imagine any poor human beings *more* in the situation of shuttle-cocks. *Side tumbles* we could have borne better, but to be obliged to hold on with all our force to the seat, throughout the livelong day, for fear of

having our heads knocked in, was rather too much of a *travelling inconvenience*. We suffered from nothing but great fatigue; but I have heard of sundry travellers who had been much less fortunate. I find no difficulty in believing *all* the stories of concussion of the brain and other frightful misadventures connected with *stage* travelling across the mountains; and when I was told that a young lady's 'back comb' had been driven three inches into her head during one of these dangerous journeys, I accepted the story at once as truth—and not as *American truth* either.

We passed no extensive clearings, but occasionally we chanced upon little cultivated spots, each of which had a neat wooden house in the centre of the newly cleared, and already half cultivated ground. Before many of these newly erected and very far from comfortable-looking houses, rosy faced and happy looking children were playing about, and running towards us, as we passed by, to catch a glimpse of us and our equipage. In poor old England, nine out of ten of those dozens of scantily clothed children would have followed us up the steep hills, with the whining accents of experienced beggars; here, happily for them, the quiver full of children is not a misfortune, but a blessing. *Here*, the miseries of childhood are unknown; and *here* are no mothers, who, driven to despair by seeing their offspring starving around

them, end both their children's sufferings and their own, by murder and suicide. And then, again, we have the hateful burial clubs, which alone, by the horrors they have entailed, and the deaths and sufferings they have caused, would make one's blood run cold to think upon! I say again, poor England! and never did I feel so inclined to envy the *under-populated* country we are travelling through, as when those happy looking children crowded round our carriage, and showed so plainly in every feature, and in every gesture, that the pressure of want had never been felt by them, or the hard hand of parish economy kept them down.

In some places the process of clearing had but just began, a tree or two only being felled, while the hardy woodman was busy at work upon another. In such cases as these, a wooden shanty was the sole protection from the inclemency of the weather; and he *guessed* that the wife and children had been left in the *settlements* till such a time as a house capable of containing them, and a *few* domestic necessaries should be prepared for their reception, in their new home in the forest. The further we advanced, and the higher the ground to which we attained, so much the more healthy was the appearance of every one we met. It is true that, in common with many other mountainous regions, the disfiguring *goitre* was often more con-

spicuous than was agreeable, but in every other respect there was nothing to complain of in the *looks* of the peasantry we met with.

We had not performed more than half our day's journey, when we began to perceive signs and symptoms that plainly denoted our entrance into a colder climate. Patches of unmelted snow lay among the dark and drooping leaves of the rhododendrons, and in sheltered places the shining ice glistened out among the grass. At some of the larger houses, we saw sledges, of various forms and kinds, brought out, as if in preparation for winter use, and skins of beasts were hung out to dry in the still warm rays of a November sun. Game of all kinds is very plentiful in these extensive forests, and the bears ('bars' as they call them here) are said to afford excellent sport. Besides these animals there are plenty of deer, and a beast which *they* call a *painter* or panther, but which is, in reality, nothing more than an enormous species of wild cat. They have also wolves and wild turkeys in great abundance. Of smaller game there is what is called the partridge—a larger bird than our own, but not nearly so well flavoured; and another which our driver called a pheasant, but which, on making inquiry, we discovered to be a fowl possessed of much rarer qualities—namely, the *prairie hen*.

Towards noon, we had one continued and very long ascent which lasted a couple of hours, and

when we had surmounted it we found we had arrived at the centre and highest ridge of the Alleghanys. We were now at the height of about two thousand seven hundred feet above the level of the sea, and thought it high time to bait our horses, and recruit our own strength by a little rest, and such a dinner as we could hope to obtain at so great an elevation above civilized life.

The inn at which our driver drew up, though calling itself, as a matter of course, a *hoetel*, did not, in its outward appearance, give much promise of good cheer within. On seeing us stop before his house, the landlord, a stout, burly mountaineer, came out to receive us with a cigar in his mouth, and the warmest welcome I ever met with, even in that proverbially hospitable place, an inn. On this occasion, however, we were fairly justified in suspecting his joy to be even somewhat more interested than such welcomes usually are, as the house was not one of the usual stopping places for the stages, and our advent was evidently quite an unlooked for blessing. There was but one *parlour* in the wooden building into which we were ushered. It was, in fact, but little more than an overgrown shanty, built of thin planks of wood, and surrounded by a *summery*-looking verandah, which seemed to us, shivering as we were after our cold drive, a very unnecessary appendage in these freezing regions.

To our dismay, we found no fire in the chimney, which was as wide and high as those which we sometimes see in old farm-houses in England, and was adapted for burning wood alone. We had not, however, long to wait with chattering jaws and ruthless faces, for the landlord speedily appeared with his arms full of *oak timber*, and we were soon, one and all, speedily employed in blowing the welcome sparks into a blaze. The *all* of our host's establishment consisted, as we soon discovered, of a small, deformed boy and himself; in consequence of which paucity of attendants, the latter was obliged to officiate in the treble capacities of landlord, cook, and waiter. The fire, which soon burned bright and cheerily, was most welcome to us after our mountain drive; for the sharp, north wind had blown keenly through the ill-fitting doors and windows of our huge *glass-coach*, and we were chilled to the bone. After a wonderfully short delay, the *gentleman* of the house appeared with the result of his culinary art, and, after all the apologies he had made for scantiness of provisions, &c., we were agreeably surprised, both at the quantity and quality of the food which was laid on the table. The main constituents of the feast were lumps of salted bear's meat *cold*, and some hot venison steaks of excellent quality.

After hoping that we would excuse the simplicity of our fare, which (with the addition of some de-

licious mountain honey) was all he had to offer, our host seemed to consider it a part of his duty to sit down with us, and do the honours of his table, ministering to our wants, and making himself agreeable according to the best of his ways and means. He was an intelligent man. Indeed, I have generally noticed that those who have energy sufficient to induce them to venture into still uncleared and unsettled districts, are almost always endowed with considerable powers of mind and great faculties of observation. He was a regular Yankee, except in his dimensions, which were more worthy of the lengthy race of 'old Kentuck.' Though in this solitary and necessarily hardworking situation, he still wore the invariable black silk waistcoat and broad-toed dancing-boots, which I have noticed alike as worn by the settler on the muddy banks of the Mississippi, and by the New England farmer, even when working themselves in their diggings and clearings. But to return to our rather amusing dinner. Our drink was water from the spring, with rye whisky, in case we should happen to have no taste for so simple a beverage; and our talk was of Oregon, California, the chances of war, sporting, and taxation. Altogether, the conversation was far from uninteresting, neither was it dull; and I could not help thinking how differently a man, belonging to the same class in England, would in all probability have behaved

if placed in similar circumstances. When dinner was over, we wandered out into the village, (if village it could be called,) while the horses were being put into the carriage. There were not more than a dozen log houses in it, and those were of the most primitive description. They were erected with some regard to regularity on either side of the way, and one of them (the most conspicuous, of course) was the blacksmith's shop. Our appearance evidently caused a vast deal of commotion and excitement in the mountain settlement. These people are very 'cute, even in the most remote parts of the country, in discovering a 'stranger;' and an English person is known and accosted as a Britisher the moment he is seen. That evening we arrived about five o'clock at a place called *Smithfield*. The name was not an auspicious one, as visions of fat oxen, over driven, and plethoric sheep, and dirty cattle-pens, flitted before our mental vision. Happily, however, the Smithfield of the Alleghanys is a place as widely different from its namesake as can well be imagined. There are a few, a very few, houses in it besides the inn, and these lie snugly together in a valley worthy of Switzerland. Through this valley runs a winding stream, over which is thrown a picturesque bridge. The spot is in itself so sheltered from every cold and biting blast, that though very far above the level of the sea, and in the heart of these vast

mountains, the air was mild and balmy. We sat late in the evening on the parapet of the bridge, and watched the lengthening shadows, and the little children, as they drove down the cows from their pasturage on the neighbouring hills. Our busy fancies soon carried us away to far off Europe, to that miniature republic of the Old World, the 'land of mountains and of lakes.' It is true there were no—

Alps,

The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,
And throned Eternity in icy halls.

But still the spot we were in reminded us most forcibly of a Swiss valley, and it only wanted the distant sound of the Ranz des Vaches to make the illusion complete. How much is there in this land to excite poetical feeling in the people, and yet, somehow or other, the muse does not seem to flourish in this part of the world. Wordsworth says—

Oh! many are the poets that are sown
By Nature; men endowed with highest gifts,
The vision and the faculty divine
Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse.

This may be the case with the Americans, for as yet they certainly have not displayed any great genius for rhyming; so with conviction, and after much dispassionate consideration of the subject, we felt ourselves obliged to come to the conclu-

sion, that there is much truth in their own quaint distich :

A man no more can make his self a poet,
No more a sheep can make his self a *go-it*.

We had just arrived at this important decision, when our attention was suddenly arrested by seeing a little fairhaired girl, of some seven years of age, come tripping gaily past us, while she sang the pretty little song of the 'Spider and the Fly' in such a clear, ringing, joyous voice, that it gladdened our hearts to hear her. Up, and all along the steep sides of the hills, were black and yawning holes—chasms they might be called—and out of these the villagers dug the fuel for their daily consumption. Over the greater part of these vast mountains there is found, within a foot or two of the surface of the soil, coal in the greatest abundance, and of the most excellent quality. It was a cheering sight to look in at the cottage doors and see the large fires blazing cheerfully within, while the whole family were gathered round the abundant supper that was spread on the table. It was long before we could make up our minds to wander back to our night's resting-place ; nor was it till many a star, 'the poetry of heaven,' had begun to gem the sky, that we bade adieu to that sweet and silent spot.

Our evening meal was excellent, but on the whole, we had a very small amount of comfort

during our fourteen hours stay at Smithfield. The stages rattled up to the inn-door, at the most unseemly hours of the night, and we heard the *whoops* and *halloos* of the passengers, and the vociferations of all parties with a distinctness which at first caused us no little surprise. Towards morning, we made the discovery, that *every one* of the window-frames in the room were broken, a melancholy fact, which was, doubtless, owing to there being no glazier within fifty miles of the good village of Smithfield: we lost no time in stuffing into the apertures some towels, and tattered remnants of carpets, and finally succeeded in keeping out the encroachments of external noise, and of the unwholesome night air. Our landlord did his very best to make us comfortable, and when, shaking us by the hand on our departure (which he did very heartily), and bidding us good-bye, he hoped we would 'give him a call any way, when we crossed the *Alli-gainies* again.'

There is, wonderful to say, a railroad in process of construction over these mountains, and it is advancing with great rapidity, considering the vast impediments which lie in the way of its completion. As in our own country, as well as further north in *this*, the labourers employed are mostly Irish; and a very sad set they are. Paddy cannot be quiet, let him be where he will; and nowhere is he more thoroughly outrageous than in this

‘land of liberty.’ The last *emeute* which occurred, (and they are seldom more than a week at a time without getting into some serious scrape,) was the most formidable ever yet known. The offenders mustered in great force, and showed a degree of desperation, which caused serious alarm. Their wages are, unfortunately high, and rye whiskey, still more unfortunately cheap, so that they have little chance of behaving well, or quietly. On the occasion to which I allude, the *navvies*, to the amount of some hundreds, after indulging themselves with an unlimited quantity of their national beverage, agreed with one accord to make themselves merry. The species of recreation which they unanimously chose, resembled, in some degree, that which, in the Malay language, is called ‘running a muck.’ Maddened with drink, they seized upon every kind of weapon within their reach, and it was soon evident that the indiscriminate slaughter of every well-disposed person whom they might happen to meet, was the end and aim of their intoxicated minds. Strong and decided measures were, of course, immediately taken to put them down, and, with the assistance of a strong body of military, the ringleaders were secured. Eventually, those who had played the most prominent part in the insurrection were, to the number of eighteen, condemned to solitary confinement for life. We were told, that on this occasion, more than a thousand

barrels of whisky (the primary cause of all the mischief) were sent floating down the hill-side, to the great grief of the recreant Paddies.

We journeyed on through the second day with no variety in the scenery, and nothing to remark upon, except that the road became worse every moment, and that our heads and limbs were in greater and more imminent danger than ever. In summer weather, this road must be a very pleasant one to travel over, particularly when the thick masses of azalias and rhododendrons are in full bloom, and the innumerable varieties of Alpine flowers are throwing up their brilliant blossoms by the road-side. Such a horticultural treat, during a journey, (the greater part of which is unavoidably performed at a very slow pace,) would almost reconcile one to any *shakes* or discomforts.

We had gone on in so very monotonous a manner for several hours, that we were beginning to lose all interest in what was in itself so *uninteresting* as this stage of our journey, when the carriage suddenly stopped. The sun had just reached his meridian, and after a dull and threatening morning, was peeping out for the first time between his curtains of clouds, when our attention was attracted by this unexpected halt. We looked out, and what a change of prospect was before us! We had emerged from the dark forests, and, to our great

surprise, were looking down upon the vast plains beneath us. Far and wide, and on every side, stretched the vast expanse of country: and cultivated lands, and broad shining rivers, and thriving towns, with spires glistening in the sunshine, all were spread, as in a vast panorama, before us. The driver looked into the carriage, and pointed all these things out to us, and verily, he seemed as proud of the beautiful prospect before him, as is the Italian postilion when he introduces a traveller to his first glimpse of the eternal city.

We were a long time creeping down the long hill to Union Town. The road is beautifully made, throughout the entire descent, but it is nevertheless very steep, and our driver, partly perhaps because the horses were his own, and partly from the admixture of Scotch caution, (for he was from the *canny* side of the Tweed,) tempering the fire of Yankee recklessness, drove very slowly and carefully. The view varied with every turn in the road, and after a while, cottages (picturesque ones, too) by the wayside, became gradually more frequent, and symptoms of civilization increased rapidly. About two o'clock in the afternoon, we entered Union Town, a clean, nice-looking village, for it is as yet nothing more, with quite an English inn at the entrance. We asked for dinner, and they brought us the infallible beefsteak, and the corn-

bread, the *no* wine, and the offer of new milk. Fresh eggs, however, were plentiful—so we had not, after all, much reason to complain.

We had a very amusing example here, of the power of womankind over the rough people, and also of the habitual respect and deference that is paid them. A stage was stopping to change horses, and when it drew up, we perceived that in its interior was seated a solitary individual. This individual was a gentleman, and we saw, with half a glance, that he was English. He was busily engaged in reading a newspaper, and with his feet comfortably stretched out on the back seat, was paying no attention to external sights and sounds. He was not, however, allowed to enjoy his luxurious solitude long; for immediately after the stage stopped, the master of the inn opened the door of the carriage, and civilly requested him to move to the opposite seat, as some ladies were about to bear him company on the road. The Englishman's face of astonishment and disgust was highly amusing. He stared at his interlocutor, and looked anything but inclined to comply with his request. The inn-keeper continued to assure him, in a bland but still peremptory manner, that the move must be made, for that 'the ladies' were, on all occasions, to be considered first. This doctrine seemed entirely new to the indignant traveller, who, after keeping silence for some minutes during the harangue, with a dig-

nity and solemnity worthy of his country, at last broke out with a degree of violence truly insular. He insisted (quite forgetting the country he was in, and apparently carried away by the force of his imagination to his own *purse-ridden* land) that he had engaged the particular place he occupied at Cumberland, that he had paid for it, and would not give it up for any one living. It made him ill, he affirmed, to sit anywhere else, and being an invalid, he required consideration quite as much as any *woman* in the world. His opponent only grew the calmer as the Englishman waxed more violent, and I fear, I must add, *abusive expletives* of anything but a gentle and conciliatory nature, fell thick and fast from his lips, and, by this time, a considerable crowd was collected, (among whom were the bones of contention—namely, the three angular and locomotive females.) We began to watch the contest with considerable interest, though we had little doubt as to what the result would finally be. Our countryman continued perfectly immovable, and it soon became evident that nothing but a forcible ejection would have any effect in causing him to quit his place. I quite pitied him, it *was* so difficult, after committing himself in this public manner, and with so many hostile eyes fixed upon him, to concede anything in this advanced stage of the business. He little suspected, poor man! the signal defeat that was in store for him. At length,

the Yankee seemed to understand that there was no chance of concession, on the part of his dogged opponent, so he quietly shut up the door of the carriage, saying—‘Very well, sir, just as you please; you may stay there from this to eetarnity, for what I care.’ Upon this the Englishman, evidently considering that he had obtained the victory, resumed his newspaper, perhaps his feet, and without condescending to cast even a look on the surrounding crowd, wrapped himself up in his studies. In the meantime, we, who were behind the scenes, looked on, and smiled at the ingenious device to which the innkeeper had recourse. Within an almost incredibly short space of time, another *stage*, which stood under a sort of open shed, was made ready for the journey, and the horses, which *were* to have been attached to the carriage in which sat the unsuspecting traveller, were affixed to the vehicle, which it was evident was intended by the treacherous innkeeper to take its place. The passengers were already seated in it, and there still sat the ‘Britisher,’ in the enjoyment of his dignified solitude, and perfectly unconscious of the absurdity of his position. A shout of laughter, from the assembled bystanders, at length, compelled him to look up: the stage was on the very point of starting; already had the ‘all right,’ ‘go-a-head,’ been sung out, when perceiving that there was not a moment to be lost, the Englishman,

with a degree of moral courage, for which I honoured him, jumped out of his hiding-place, with his pride in his pocket, but with manifest confusion on his brow, and took his place in the condemned 'back seat,' amidst screams of laughter from the crowd, who were overjoyed that the Yankee had 'come 'possum' over the 'Britisher.' I did not envy him his drive with the 'women scorned,' during the tedious hours that must elapse before he would arrive at his journey's end.

After resting the horses for a couple of hours, we proceeded through a flat and very unpicturesque country to Brownsville, where we were to pass the night. I have forgotten to mention to you that, during this our last day's journey, we passed by 'Great Meadows,' a spot rendered interesting from the fact of its having been the field where Washington was first engaged in battle. His opponents on that occasion were the French, and their allies the Indians. Here it was that, according to history, he first heard the whistling of bullets, and found, as he himself said, 'something charming in the sound.' A heap of stones was pointed out to us as Braddock's grave, and this was the only sign or vestige that remained of Fort Necessity, a defence which was erected by Washington, and afterwards abandoned to the Indians. Ninety-three years ago, Washington had marched by nearly the same route over which we had travelled since

we left Cumberland. In those early days they had frequently to hack and hew their way through the thick and entirely uncleared forest, and those who have the misfortune to pass over the same mountain road *now*, (when so much has been done to render the way comparatively easy,) can form some slight idea of the difficulties which in those days lay in the path of the advancing army. On the year following that in which this hazardous expedition was undertaken, Washington again traversed the same route. On this occasion, he was aide-de-camp to the unfortunate General Braddock, who was afterwards defeated on the Monongahela River, whilst marching to the attack of Fort Duquesne. The general, who was mortally wounded in the battle, died three days afterwards at Fort Necessity, and the command of the troops then devolved upon Washington, whose masterly manner of conducting their retreat afforded the first striking evidence of that great military skill and readiness of resources for which he afterwards became so remarkable, and which eventually exercised so mighty an influence on the destinies of his country.

There was something both in the scenery and in the somewhat damp cold of the air, in the neighbourhood of Brownsville, which forcibly brought to my recollection some parts of England, or perhaps I might with greater truth say of *Wales*.

LETTER XXIII.

SLEEP AT BROWNSVILLE—EMBARK FOR PITTSBURG
 —COAL — THE BIRMINGHAM OF THE WEST—
 DESCRIPTION OF THE CITY — ON BOARD THE
 ALLIQUIPPA STEAMER FOR CINCINNATI — FALL
 OF SNOW — WATER PRIVILEGES — BIGGRAVE
 CREEK—INDIAN MOUNDS.

On board 'Consul'—November.

BROWNSVILLE is a most dirty town, dirty with smoke, and coal, and manufactures. It stands on the Monongahela river, across which is thrown rather a handsome bridge. We found our hotel remarkably comfortable. There was no appearance of public dining, ordinaries, or 'ladies' parlour;' and we had a sitting room to ourselves, opening into a pretty and well-kept garden, and a sleeping apartment within it, which was fitted up with every comfort. Our evening meal (*tea* is an important repast with the Americans) consisted of delicious kinds of bread, both corn and wheat, preserves of many sorts, strawberry, apricot, and peach, rich cream, and excellent *tea*. The latter luxury is almost always good in this country. I must not, in this enumeration of 'the delicacies of

the season,' forget to mention with respect a sort of pancake, which we had at Brownsville, in the greatest perfection : it is made of Indian corn, and is brought in very *hot*, and in *relays*. It is, I fancy, called a 'Johnny cake,' and is generally eaten with molasses ; but it is excellent with fresh butter, and is, I believe, one of the causes of the brevity of human existence here. Our attendant was a neat-handed little damsel of ten years old ; she was a pretty intelligent child, and the niece of the landlord. In any other country she would have been still in the nursery, but here, where everything and everybody are precocious, she was head waiter, chambermaid, and, for aught I know to the contrary, housekeeper besides. Her attention to our wants was incessant, and though, like every one else in the country, admitting no difference of ranks, and behaving to us exactly as she would to any decently dressed person of the poorest class, there was nothing offensive in the way she lingered in the room to watch, what evidently appeared to her the magic movements of a crochet needle, or the mysteries of an English workbox. It is surprising how rapidly we grew accustomed to these little republican peculiarities, and how soon we began to understand that, however he may be *disgraced* by an ill-made coat, or a humble occupation, ' a man's a man for a' that.'

Small pox was very rife in Brownsville and its

neighbourhood, and had, in many instances, proved fatal. A great prejudice exists among the poorer classes against vaccination, and this, added to the want of cleanliness, which is very remarkable, of course increases very much both the danger of the disease and its rapid spread through the country. Every one we met in the town of Brownsville had a face more or less begrimed with smoke and coal-dust. Altogether, it reminded me very much of some parts of my own dear country. And the next morning, as we stood upon the wharf, waiting for the steamer that was to convey us down the river, I could have fancied myself in a Staffordshire village, with the dingy-faced coal-workers around me. The situation of Brownsville is very pretty. It stands on the edge of the river, the banks of which are very high and prettily shaped; nor is the stream itself by any means a contemptible one.

It was eight o'clock on the morning of a cold, damp, winter's day, when we stepped on board the 'Consul,' a small steamer, which 'carried the mail,' and was bound for Pittsburg, a *great* place, according to the Americans, and called by them (by way of eulogy) the 'Birmingham of the West.' We felt directly we embarked, that we were now at the commencement of another stage in our travels. Our land-journeying was for the time over, and we had before us more than two thousand miles of rivers, which were to be traversed by steam power.

Already, since we first landed in America, had we compassed about twelve hundred miles by railroad, and altogether it had been done with very little expense, either of convenience or money.

Very miserable and dirty our little steamer was ; it was impossible to be on deck a minute without being covered with black specks, or *greased* by some horrid invention in the neighbourhood of the funnel. As to remaining below, no *female* but one born and raised on the land could dream of it for a moment : the alternative was, however, very far from agreeable, as independently of the evils of dirt, grease, and smoke, there were others on deck in the shape of 'loafing characters,' whose neighbourhood was decidedly objectionable, and whom at the same time it was difficult to avoid, from the crowded state of the vessel.

The coal excavations on either side of the river, in the high and almost perpendicular hills which skirt it, are extremely curious. These hills are, in fact, the *banks* of the river, and are enriched with coal of a most excellent quality. Throughout the whole way, as we moved along, we noticed, even up to the summits, the great black openings from which the coal is taken. From these dark apertures there extend wide inclined planes, several hundred feet in length, which reach downwards to the level of the river. At the extremity of these sloping *roads*, if such they may be called, are

stationed large flat-bottomed boats, into which the useful mineral is precipitated, with but very little cost of money, time, or labour. A vast quantity of coal is thus sent off in these flat-bottomed boats—which are, in fact, a species of raft—to New Orleans, at which place it is now in general use. The voyage thither is by no means quickly performed, as the length of time which is employed in it varies from two to three months. A sort of wooden shanty is built on the raft, and a party of three or four men are generally seen together on the boat in charge of the cargo. These men, like so many of our own bargemen, are generally lawless, reckless characters, and bear but an indifferent reputation for honesty and the rest of the social duties.

It was late at night, and very dark, when the 'Consul' approached the town of Pittsburgh, and I could then see that at night its resemblance to our own great manufacturing city was in some respects not exaggerated, nor its nickname misapplied. Far and wide shone the furnaces in the murky darkness, and brightly blazed the flames, as they shot and streamed upwards, high in air, through many a black chimney of the busy city of Pittsburgh. As we approached the city, the murmuring sounds, peculiar to a thickly-inhabited and manufacturing town, became louder and louder, till, at length, they settled into a confirmed *din*, as

our steamer touched the shore, and was made fast to terra firma.

We had some difficulty in finding our way to the hotel to which we had been directed, and which was in the heart of the city: but we *did* at last contrive to reach it, and were at once convinced that *such* an hotel would not have been out of place in the oldest and dirtiest manufacturing city in the world. It was a great wide-spreading, open-mouthed building, lighted from top to bottom with most unpleasantly smelling gas, and noisy with bustling waiters and flippant chambermaids. We were shown into large lofty gloomy rooms, with dingy red curtains and carpets, and looking as if the dust and dirt with which they were encrusted had been accumulating on them for a century at least. Take that hotel altogether, it was the oldest looking thing *of any kind* I had yet seen in America, and so complete was the illusion contained in the *venerable* sights, sounds, and smells of the place, that I found it difficult to believe I was actually in the *new* city of Pittsburgh on the Monongahala, and not in the 'Hen and Chickens,' or some such place in Birmingham or Leeds.

The next day a great part of the illusion was destroyed, and excepting in the matter of dirt and smoke, we were obliged to confess that the inhabitants of Pittsburgh are somewhat premature in arrogating so much importance to themselves.

When they compare their town to any of our principal commercial cities, it is evident they are too boastful, for however much we might be deceived at night by the lurid glare of the furnace fires into an undue respect for the outward merits of the place, we could form a truer opinion when broad daylight brought other things to view. Notwithstanding the reputed prosperity of this rapidly-arisen city, there is very little that is flourishing in its appearance. Business is, of course, carried on to a great extent, but there is not much of the *movement* which generally is observable where its claims are paramount. There are very few carriages in the streets; poor-looking stores, and a generally *untidy* and *neglected* appearance in everything and everybody. All this was what first struck us as we walked through the streets the next day to the steamer. *Some* of the windows in most of the houses were broken, so as to convey a general idea that a 'popular movement' had lately taken place to the detriment of order and glass, and the streets were moreover ill-paved, and many an unseemly gutter running through the town emptied its unpleasant contents into the river. These were our *first* impressions of Pittsburgh, nor did we stay long enough for a chance of being able to correct them, so I give them to you as they were received.

I can, however, speak more favourably of the

advantages of Pittsburgh, as far as regards the site on which it has been built, and which are very great as regards *natural* beauty. The town is situated in the angle formed by the junction of the Alleghany and Monongahala rivers, which, when united into *one*, take the name of the *Ohio*. Behind the city, and rising immediately at the outskirts of the town, are a range of hills of considerable elevation, extending from river to river, and enclosing, with the aid of the two above-named rivers, the triangular plain on which the town is built. Here and there, and at small distances from the scene of their daily occupations, are the country *villas* of the rich manufacturers; and on every side, the hills, adorned in many parts with picturesque woods, rise up in 'beautiful confusion,' and prove, both externally and internally, (notwithstanding all that the art of man can do to destroy the works of nature,) that 'earth still fills her lap with treasures of her own.'

There are two bridges across the Alleghany and Monongahala rivers, through which the numerous steamers on each are constantly passing up and down: the roads across these bridges lead respectively to *Manchester* and *Birmingham*. Behind the latter *village* is *Coal Hill*, which rises several hundred feet above the river. The strata of coal are frequently as much as ten feet in thickness, and are often found at an elevation of three

hundred feet above the level of the river. Beneath this there is generally found no *other* stratum, till you get beneath the level of the *bottom* of the river, when the mineral is again discovered.

Pittsburgh has sprung into importance with almost as much rapidity as any other town in the union. Fifteen or twenty years ago it was a mere insignificant village, and now it has a population of forty-five thousand. It is already to North America what our Staffordshire city is to *us*, and it is probably destined at some future period to become the *Birmingham of the world*.

Pittsburgh has communication by water with the Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico, and also with the great lakes. Besides the numerous foundries, there are many other manufactories in the city, several of which are of cotton. We were told also that, in the town and its immediate neighbourhood, there are nearly two hundred distilleries.

The day following that of our arrival at Pittsburgh, we took berths in the Aliquippa steamer for Cincinnati, and we expected that we were to be two nights and two days in performing the voyage. There were not many passengers on board, and the captain was a very civil obliging Scotchman; so, in American parlance, we 'got along' very well. The food was by no means bad, and the boat a remarkably good and safe one, the only

inconvenience and annoyance from which we suffered came in the shape of an old Irishwoman, who insisted on smoking her 'dudeen' in the ladies' cabin, and was a serious infliction.

The meals on board the steamers are served in the *grand* saloon, which at other periods is inhabited solely by gentlemen. Within this saloon, and farther *aft*, is the ladies' saloon; within, and all around which, are a series of doors, each opening into what is usually a good-sized berth, containing two sleeping-places. There is another door in these private 'state-rooms,' as they are called, which is half glass, and shaded with a muslin curtain. This door opens upon a balcony or gallery, which extends all round the stern of the vessel, from paddle-box to paddle-box, and forms rather an agreeable walk, except when the stewardess is hanging out the towels to dry, which happens, on a moderate average, sixteen hours out of the twenty-four. It is, however, very important to be able to leave one's berth without the necessity of traversing either the ladies' or gentlemen's saloon. Into the berths which are within the former, or ladies' saloon, husbands alone are admitted, and no unmarried men, even if they have sisters to protect, have the privilege of *entrée*. Into the saloon itself, which is the especial property of the 'females,' gentlemen are sometimes admitted, but only on special invitation.

In the afternoon, and very soon after we left Pittsburgh, it began to snow, and anything more dreary than the aspect of every exterior thing it would be difficult to conceive. We could just imagine, as we gazed at the surrounding prospect through the thickly descending snow-flakes, that in summer it must be beautiful. The river, of which the Americans are so proud, the beautiful Ohio, winds along between high *bluffs*, which are often diversified by gently sloping hills. The bluffs which form so striking a feature in the scenery, rise up at many places abruptly from the water's edge, and are generally covered with noble-looking trees. These stately woods contain almost endless varieties of timber; as oak, walnut, beech, sycamore, maple, and elm, and numberless others, abound there, if we may give credit to a 'son of the soil,' who took upon himself to enlighten us on the subject. During the first day we were constantly passing small islands, none of which were cultivated, and all appearing as if they were occasionally subject to submersion.

For the first ninety miles of our river journey, and till we had passed Wheeling, the navigation was rendered very difficult from the shallowness of the water, and the frequency of the *bars* which stretch across it. There is generally, between the bluffs and the river, a narrow strip of land, and on these strips, (the most chosen spots in the world

for fever and ague,) one is almost certain to see a new settlement. The Americans who make up their minds to find a 'new home,' are so partial to the immediate neighbourhood of *water*, that they will forego every other advantage, and even run the risks of sacrificing the health and lives of themselves and their families, rather than give up the immense benefit of water privileges. There have been instances known where men have lost, (through the terrible fever of the country,) *every child*, and yet, after digging a grave for them with their own trembling and feverish hands, have continued by choice to struggle on with disease and difficulty in the very clearing where their families have found an early grave.

The names of the new settlements are frequently characteristic, as they often recall to one's mind the species of animal which had been dispossessed of his home when the white man came into the wilderness. Our pilot named to us, amongst others, the following, 'Beaver,' 'Fish,' 'Turkey,' 'Possom,' and 'Raccoon Creeks.' There are not wanting, also, appellations which bring before one's imagination the long past days, when the aborigines of the country lived and flourished. Of 'Indian Creeks' there was no deficiency, and occasionally the original name was retained in the Indian language. About ten miles below Wheeling

is 'Big Grave Creek,' so called from an enormous mound which is here visible, and which is supposed to have been raised by the former inhabitants of this continent. We were informed that this mound is forty rods in circumference, and seventy - five feet in height. On the summit is an area perfectly smooth and level, and of about sixty feet in diameter, with a large and deep concavity in the centre. From this hollow space, bones and other relics are said to have been taken. Though there can be no doubt that the Indians *did* use these tumuli as burying places, it is now generally admitted by geologists that these remarkable mounds, (the origin of which has been attributed to so many causes,) are not the work of human hands. The supposition that they were raised by the Indians as fortresses, in case of attack from hostile tribes, is, in these days, considered ridiculous ; and it is now ascertained beyond a doubt, that these natural monuments owe their origin to a higher power, even to that which laid the foundations of the world from the beginning. On this subject, I fancy, the wise men of the west have ceased to differ, and it appears, even on a cursory view, so simple a solution of the mystery, that the rivers, in their tumultuous course, forming eddies in particular places, should *necessarily* have shaped the alluvial deposits into the form they now bear,

that one almost wonders their real origin should have been the subject of so much controversy. That the Indians should choose these elevated spots, both for burial grounds for their dead, and for places of safety for their fighting 'braves,' is not surprising, though it is equally certain that the red man's hand was never employed in their formation.

LETTER XXIV.

ARRIVAL AT CINCINNATI — IMPROVEMENT IN AMERICAN MANNERS — THE CITY DESCRIBED — MISS L — — — AND THE INVALID — GERMAN SETTLERS — LEGIONS OF PIGS — PROFITABLE ARTICLE OF TRADE — LADIES' ORDINARY — DEPARTURE FROM CINCINNATI — THE BRIDE — INCREASE OF POPULATION IN OHIO AND KENTUCKY — ESCAPE OF SLAVES INTO THE FREE STATES — THE IRISH IN AMERICA.

On board 'Ben Franklin,' on the Ohio—November.

WE passed two nights on board the 'Consul,' and were not sorry when the morning sun showed us we were approaching Cincinnati. No one can help admiring the beauty of the spot on which has been built 'The Empire City of the West,' for it is all that can be desired for such a purpose. Imagine a valley about twelve miles in circumference, surrounded by hills clothed with fine trees, and intersected by the beautiful Ohio, which, winding through the centre of the rich plain, divides the state of Ohio from that of Kentucky. A portion of the town of Cincinnati is built on the low ground, but it also extends high

up on the hills, which are everywhere enlivened with the white houses of the suburban villas.

In many of the streets (as at Philadelphia) there are rows of trees planted between the carriage road and the trottoir. When we consider that the utmost limit we can give to the *age* of Cincinnati is fifty years, we may well acknowledge that it is a wonderful city for its 'time of life.' Fifty years ago, the Empire City was in its infancy, and now within its limits fifty thousand souls draw the breath of life.

The first thing we did after landing, was to hire a carriage, and drive at once to the highest ground, in order to obtain as comprehensive a view as possible of the town and adjacent country. The first object that arrested our attention, as we ascended the main street, was Mrs. Trollope's Bazaar. It is very near the Broadway Hotel, and is pointed out with a *little* triumph, as one of the lions (for its absurdity) of the place. This signal failure in speculation, and consequent cause (according to the Americans) of a great deal of bitterness and uncomfortable feeling on the part of its clever, but certainly misguided foundress, is a sort of *Moorish* building, of a very fanciful and *gingerbread* description. As a fancy bazaar, it never answered, and is now made use of in various ways. From the number of 'Doctors' names, which we saw engraved on the entrance door, we imagined that 'Trollope's

Folly,' as it is called, has become the emporium of pills and draughts, instead of perfumes and delicate 'dry goods.'

Mrs. Trollope, and her entertaining writings, form a frequent subject of conversation among Americans, especially when they meet with English people. In Cincinnati this was particularly to be remarked, and no wonder, as it was the theatre of her unsuccessful operations, and also that from which she drew the lively description of life and manners, under which the Americans have so greatly smarted. It would be, perhaps, *stretching a point* to say that Mrs. Trollope is *popular* in America, but at the same time I feel convinced that, were she to revisit the American continent, her reception in the States would not be an unpleasant one. Truth is very rarely palatable, and no one who has chanced to have been in the United States at the period of Mrs. Trollope's visit, can altogether deny the justice of many of her remarks, or the truth of most of her descriptions. Both people and things have, however, changed in this country since those days, and the improvement in their manners and habits of life has been rapid and great. Of this the Americans are *as* fully aware, as that *for* such improvement there was no inconsiderable need; and I consider it no mean proof of their candour that they date their advance in refinement from the appearance of

Mrs. Trollope's most entertaining work on the 'Domestic Manners of the Americans.'

Cincinnati is certainly on the whole a very fine city, but like many others in America, there is a great want of uniformity in the buildings, and a considerable deficiency of the public edifices sufficiently grand to attract the attention of the traveller. There seemed to be plenty of business carrying on in the stores, and there was no want of movement in the streets, but the former lacked everything like elegance and beauty of display, and the crowds in the latter seemed too much wrapped up in the weighty concerns of business to have much leisure to *waste* on the thoughts of dress or deportment. Before dinner we were ushered into the 'ladies' parlour,' in which we found (rather an uncommon sight here) a gentleman sitting alone. *Sitting*, however, he was not, for he was lying at full length on the sofa, wrapped in a large cloak, and an interesting *halo* of invalidism thrown round his person. The *person* only was in fault, for unfortunately the usually touching state of convalescence failed to throw any interest round an invalid who was short and stout, and moreover was neither young nor good-looking. Having nothing better to do, we amused ourselves with watching the new variety of 'human natur' before us. He was apparently wrapped up and absorbed in the expectation of some important coming event,

for he was constantly extending his languid hand to ring the bell, and when it was answered, he invariably asked the same question of the 'help'—namely, when it was likely that Mrs. and Miss L—— were expected *in*.

As time wore on, he began to wax extremely impatient, and, though he occasionally broke through the tedium of suspense by crawling to the looking-glass and settling his collar and brushing up his wig by its friendly aid, it was apparent from the rapid changes of his complexion that the sickness of hope deferred was making dreadful havoc within him. At length, and to my infinite relief, for I was growing somewhat wearied of the wanderings and ponderings of the *çi-devant* jeune homme, a fine handsome girl bounced in, with a noise and a fracas which, in the delicate circumstances of the case, I confess I thought rather unfeeling. She seized the invalid's shaking hands with both hers, and wringing them violently, exclaimed, 'My! Mr. B——, how glad we shall be to see you about again. Didn't we nurse you first-rate? If ever you feel like sickness again, you come to the Broadway hotel, and we'll fix you right away.' Then followed a recapitulation of the delicate attentions which had been paid to this thrice happy individual while suffering from a brain fever, during which, to use his own expression, he felt like dying. The trials he had endured,

and the attentions he had received, were dwelt upon so long, that the poor man grew perfectly bewildered with the excess of his gratitude. The young lady was really a magnificent specimen of full-blown beauty, fair and rosy, and though perhaps rather too much inclined to *embonpoint*, carrying it off well with plenty of height and a great deal of activity. The fair boarder (for such she was) was evidently the reigning *belle* of Cincinnati, and by way of enlivening the invalid, with whom, notwithstanding his age and infirmities, she was coquetting in a most unmerciful manner, she described with great *gusto* a ball which, on the previous night, had been given by the *élite* of Cincinnati society. At this ball she had, by her own account, demonstrated great powers of endurance. ‘You won’t realize it, I dare say, Mr. B——,’ said this *delicate* young lady; ‘but I tell you I danced the polka till I hadn’t a dry thread about me.’ ‘Possible!’ was the only remark made to this singular boast by the devoted listener, who, notwithstanding his evident adoration, was apparently beginning to sink under her amazing volubility. At last, and after many hopes expressed of meeting again soon, the *visitress* pulled a splendid and very bridal-looking veil over her face, and a pair of white gloves on her hands, and with a broad stare round the room, bounced out of it as noisily as she had entered. As I was preparing to make

my exit, a few minutes afterwards ‘l’enfant chéri des dames’ lifted up his languid head, and addressed me thus—‘Now, ma’am, isn’t that young lady about the most beautiful female you ever saw?’ I pretended not to hear the remark, and made my escape, leaving him to his reverie and his recollections.

A great proportion of the inhabitants of Cincinnati are Germans; there are many names from *Deutschland* above the shop doors, and an inn is as frequently a *Gast Haus* as an hotel. It would hardly be believed to what extent the German settlers in the New World contrive to lose all their proverbial love of their *Fatherland*. Not only are they *more* eager and willing to become naturalized citizens of their new country than any other people, but they are always the *most* ready to reprobate the institutions of the government to which they once professed allegiance, and to heap abuse on what they call the *slavery* of the country they have disowned.

We are told that Cincinnati is *the* great commercial city of the west, and there are certainly manufactories in it of every sort and kind; including cotton, woollen, hardware, and dry goods of every description. Most of the western steamboats are built here, and, turn whichever way you will, you are certain to hear the voice of the busy monster, *steam*, either clanking its machinery, or

puffing and snorting with high pressure engines, on the river.

But of all the sights and sounds which make themselves seen and heard at Cincinnati, those which arise from the presence of the swinish multitude strike the stranger with the greatest astonishment. It is, literally speaking, a *city of pigs*, and in consequence, the sobriquet of *Porkopolis* is nearly as frequently used, when speaking of the Empire City, as the more euphonious name by which it is known in the maps and guide books. The immense extent to which pigs do here preponderate may be in some degree guessed, when I tell you that they are slain by *thousands* in the day. Alive and dead, whole and divided into portions, their outsides and their insides, their grunts and their squeals, meet you at every moment; and thus, in some shape or other, you fall in with swine and swine's flesh throughout the livelong day.

Hoping to escape for awhile from these ugly inhabitants of the town, we took a second drive into the country, but, alas, on the suburban road their name might truly be called Legion! We met the unclean beasts by hundreds, grunting along under the very wheels of our carriage, and, in the true spirit of monopolizing stupidity, endeavouring to keep the whole of the road to themselves. We thought to make matters better, by looking *down* from the heights on which we were driving, but

there they were again! In *pens*, and all ready for the knife of the pig-killer, there were crammed together whole herds of swine; nor could we turn our eyes on either side of the road without being horrified at the sight of slaughter-houses, in which doomed pigs were feeding, and that on aliment of a kind the most revolting that the imagination can conceive. All these offensive sights marred the beauty of the country road, and sent us home thoroughly disgusted, and almost ready to register a vow that the flesh of the unholy animal should never be tasted by us more.

You will think that the grunting creatures of the Empire City have so impressed themselves on my mind, that they have become an *idée fixe*, and so in truth they have; nor can I hope to forget them till I have something more than an 'ounce of civet,' with which to sweeten my imagination. Those horrible Cincinnati pigs! Horrible when living, and nearly as atrocious when death has claimed them for his own! We could not look into a warehouse in the street without being agonized by the sight of thousands of dead corpses, heaped and piled upon one another, up to the ceiling—all singed and white, and cold looking. There they lay, huddled together without any regard to decency, or any consideration for the feelings of the survivors. There were hundreds and thousands of barrels lying before the doors,

all of which contained pickled pork, and all tightly packed and ready for exportation. In short, what with the universal announcement over every third house, that 'tripe and pigs' feet were to be had within,' and the confirmed fact that every third person you meet is unquestionably a pig merchant, who can wonder that the impression made upon the mind of a foreigner by the general aspect of Cincinnati, is of a most material, and far from romantic nature ?

The salt pork used in the English navy, is supplied in a great measure from this monster piggery ; but it is only of late years that this has been the case. The English 'provision merchants' who were engaged in this branch of traffic, found, for a considerable period after the undertaking was commenced, that the pork supplied by them did not give satisfaction, being neither well packed, nor properly *cut up*. At one time it was almost feared that the speculation, which promised to be so lucrative, would, in consequence of this unlooked for misfortune, be pronounced *not to answer*, and that the idea of disembarking pigs from their head quarters of Porkopolis must be abandoned altogether. The thought, however, happily suggested itself, that it would be wise to try the experiment of sending out *packers*, and *cutters* and *hewers*, from home. This was, accordingly, done ; Paddy was brought over from Cork or Liverpool, and the

American artists having learnt to *fix* the pigs in the most approved manner for the English market, the useful creatures are now become a most flourishing branch of trade, and one which mainly tends to keep up the wealth and importance of the city of Cincinnati.

The ladies' dinner, which was not considered as exclusively that of the fairer sex, was very amusing at Cincinnati. The repast in itself differed but little from those to which we had been accustomed at the ordinaries in more northern cities. There was always a large turkey, with a considerable quantity of greasy stuff about it, which is called dressing, and I remarked that every one who ate of the bird particularly requested to have a 'side bone.' I sometimes fancied they imagined a turkey to be an *octagon*, at least. There were innumerable little homœopathic specimens of the culinary art reposing in saucers, and ate of by the ladies alone, and lastly, a very little piece of soft and nondescript pudding (also in a saucer) was placed before each guest, and then the dinner was over, and every one rose suddenly and retired.

Directly opposite to our accustomed seat, sat the Polking Beauty of Porkopolis. Impossible to do justice to her vivacious coquetries, or to the admiring responses of the sentimental pig merchants who swelled her triumphant train. She looked as happy as beauty, youth, fine clothes, and

the admiration she excited could make her; and when, on the last day of our stay, we left the dinner-table to repair on board the 'Ben Franklin' steamer, there still sat the fair Miss L——, as gay, as lovely, and (I must say the word) as *rowdy* as ever.

The 'Ben Franklin' was to convey us (in company with a good many other passengers) to Louisville; she was a fast boat but remarkably uncomfortable, and our first meal on board, among a crowd of hungry feeders, was an unhappy mixture of tea and supper, and not an agreeable repast, take it altogether. After supper was ended, those who had the *entrée* of the ladies' saloon returned to it, and then, and not till then, I perceived in a retired place, and evidently shrinking from observation, the blooming boarder of the Broadway Hotel! She was not alone, for a gentleman (evidently her *husband*, and *not* one of the Porkopolian *lions*) was paying her a vast deal of conjugal attention. The truth of the matter was soon apparent. It was a runaway match, and the fugitives from parental authority had hid themselves in some obscure corner of the vessel till such time as a considerable portion of the Ohio river should be interposed between them and their probable pursuers. The *knot* was, however, safely tied; the deed (as I afterwards learnt) having been done

three days before ; in short, on the very morning of her cruel flirtation with the elderly invalid. That splendid veil had not been put on for nothing, nor had the white gloves been without their use. The fair bride was bound for St. Louis, so we saw but little more of her, but we quite agreed with the stout but unfortunate gentleman above named, that she *was one* of the most beautiful *females* we had ever seen, and it appeared that her independence of character fully kept pace with her personal charms.

The Ohio at Cincinnati is of considerable width, and runs between the State of Ohio and the much more interesting one of Kentucky. We greatly regretted that we had not time to visit that beautiful State, and all its great and natural wonders. To a person fond of farming, Kentucky offers great attractions, and the lover of the picturesque would find endless subjects for admiration ; the Mammoth Caves alone would, I imagine, repay the exertions of a traveller coming many long miles to see them. From the description I have received from eye-witnesses, these celebrated caves, which are about seventy miles from Cincinnati, are of an extent, the immense amount of which is even yet unknown. It is said, that for *three hundred miles* you can travel underground through, and over, the various *roads, paths, and rivers* which nature, and

nature alone, has formed in this wondrous subterranean world! The climate in the caves is so mild, and so perfectly equable, that invalids, even in the worst stages of consumption, are frequently sent to them by the advice of their medical attendants, in order to prolong, by a few more weeks or months, their melancholy and hopeless existence. I knew one poor suffering lady, who was recommended, as a last resource, to try the *air* of the Mammoth Caves. She was in a deep decline, and had long been perfectly aware that her days were numbered. Her reply to the physicians was, 'Let me not be buried alive, and before my time; the short period that is left me on earth would (if I followed your advice) be nearly valueless to me. No, let me enjoy, while I can, the breezes of the upper air, and breathe my last with sunshine and daylight around me.'

We have now *steamed round* nearly two sides of the great State of Ohio, the river forming its boundary, on the east and south, for about four hundred miles, and dividing it from the Slave States of Virginia and Kentucky. During these many miles of river navigation, we had ample opportunities of verifying the remarks made by so many travellers on the widely different aspect of the country on each side of the Ohio, and of drawing unprejudiced comparisons between the

appearance of the Free and that of the Slave States. The *difference* is certainly very remarkable, and nowhere are the advantages of employing free labour (where the climate will admit of its being done) so apparent as they are here. Ohio became a State of the Union several years after Kentucky had been incorporated with it, and *now* the population of the former is just double that of 'Old Kentuck.' You will ask the probable reason of this disproportionate increase. It is because emigrants will not venture to settle in a State where they have a chance of coming into competition *as labourers* with slaves. Kentucky possesses advantages fully equal to those of Ohio. (I might, perhaps, say even greater) in regard to soil and climate, yet, notwithstanding this, so much more extensive has been the emigration to the latter State, that its population amounts to a million and a half, and labouring hands are so abundant that the farmer, in most parts of the country, can hire (whenever he requires it) an industrious, hard-working German at half a dollar a day, and frequently even for lower wages.

The people of Kentucky are so fully awake to these advantages, that they are now, I believe, quite unanimous in their desire that slavery should be abolished in their State. I understand that, on one occasion, ten or fifteen years ago, this

desirable consummation was all but effected, when, at the eleventh hour, some difficulties were raised on the part of the *free* States, which caused the scheme to be abandoned. If the curse of slavery were once removed, there is no doubt that the prosperity of Kentucky would soon equal, or perhaps surpass, that of any other State in the Union; white labourers would then be plentiful, and the owners of the soil would no longer be impoverished by the numerous idlers in the shape, both of what are *supposed* to be *working* negroes, and also of old and incompetent slaves whom they are now obliged to support. I am told that some of the large slave-owners in the southern parts of Kentucky and Tennessee are beginning to employ their slaves in manufactures, and that they have now two or three cotton and woollen factories, which are in successful operation.

As may be supposed, the Abolitionists on the north bank of the Ohio, do not fail to take advantage of their favourable position; on the contrary, their efforts towards advancing the cause of freedom are great and unceasing. It is owing to this, and to their constantly endeavouring to induce the slaves to run away from their owners, that so strong a feeling of jealousy and dislike is felt between the two States. The running away of slaves into the free State of Ohio is not nearly so common an event

now, as it formerly was, and many causes have conspired together to put a stop to it. Among others, I may instance the fact, that those very advocates of freedom who induced the poor deluded negro to attempt his escape from bondage, frequently gave him up again themselves *to justice* for the sake of the high reward, which is always offered for 'runaway negroes.' Sometimes, a fate still worse awaited them, for there are not wanting miscreants, who are base and cruel enough, to persuade the blacks to escape with them to Texas, and there (or perhaps in the still more lawless state of Arkansas) to sell them again for their own profit. The Kentucky slaves are, at length, beginning to understand that their condition is not so bad but that it might be worse, and *that* even in their fancied paradise, the *Free States*, they might find cause to regret the land of their bondage. After all, I verily believe that their owners are more to be pitied than themselves.

Though, as may naturally be supposed, emigrants will not resort from preference to a Slave State, yet it has been found that when their lot happens to be cast there, they do not, at least in the northernmost Slave States, consider themselves as degraded in the social scale, by consenting to work with the black labourer. We saw them toiling willingly together, and I have reason to believe

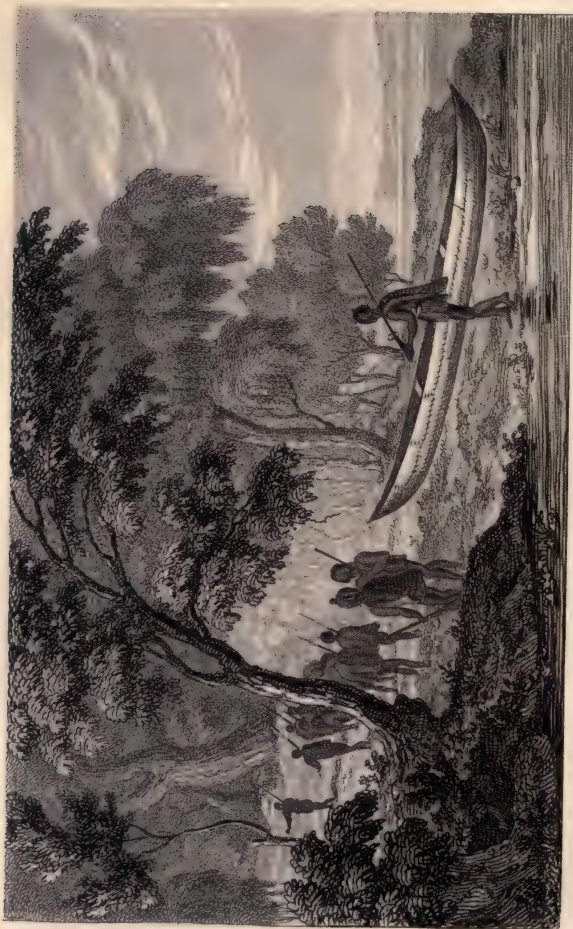
that it is only on the large plantations in the south that an insurmountable prejudice against such an approximation exists.

Kentucky is a great agricultural county, and there are many Scotch and Irish farmers located on its rich lands, all of whom are 'going-a-head' at a great rate. We made many inquiries as to the state of feeling towards the Old Country, which prevailed among these prosperous settlers. From all we could gather, we came to the conclusion (and that with great regret) that the English and Scotch emigrants, when 'well to do,' are very far (generally speaking) from cherishing any warm feeling for, or sentimental recollection of, the land of their birth. One of their great aims seems to be to *swamp* all memory of their former lot, and to deny their country altogether. As to their countrymen, they endeavour to lose sight of *them* as much as possible, particularly if they are less well off as to this world's goods than themselves, and, in short, they give up their nationality as far as it is in their power to do so, at once and for ever. With the Irish, who come out to this country, the case is widely different. Paddy is never known to show a cold shoulder to a former friend, or to disown a compatriot, however poor and destitute. He is, even when thousands of miles away, proud of his own green island, while

living, and when death cuts him short, in the midst of his rye-whisky and his waggery, his mortal remains are followed to their (probably impromptu) burial-place by all the Irishmen in the neighbourhood, and he gets an '*iligant* wake,' even in the distant country where his own improvidence, and Ireland's misfortunes have induced him to seek a home.

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HESPEROS:

OR,

TRAVELS IN THE WEST.

BY

MRS. HOUSTOUN,

AUTHOR OF "TEXAS, AND THE GULF OF MEXICO."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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HESPEROS:

OR,

TRAVELS IN THE WEST.

LETTER XXV.

STEAM-BOAT DISASTERS — THE CAUSES OF SUCH ACCIDENTS — ON BOARD THE ‘BEN FRANKLIN,’ EN ROUTE FOR LOUISVILLE—IMPERTINENCE OF A WHITE STEWARDESS — AMERICAN HONEY-MOONS — HEAVY FALL OF SNOW — ARRIVAL AT LOUISVILLE — AN UNINVITING ‘CITY’—EMBARK IN THE ‘LEONORA.’

On board the ‘Leonora,’ on the Ohio—November.

THE ‘Ben Franklin’ had, like all the American steam-boats, high pressure engines, and therefore, as some sort of security, there were *life preservers* hung up in every state room, and a talk of accidents, past, present, and to come, was in every one’s mouth. We were assured, (and the intimation *appeared* given in kindness, and with the intention, as we thought, of relieving our fears,) that *only* ten steamers had been lost on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, within the last month! Various

causes exist for the numerous disasters ; the principal one arises from a mistaken idea of economy which prompts the owners of the vessels to delay the putting in of *new* boilers, till long after they have become absolutely useless from old age, and the consequent thinness of the iron. When arrived at this stage of incapacity for their work, the boiler frequently explodes, generally without a moment's warning ; and the consequence is, that the life of every soul on board is often sacrificed to the cupidity of one pennywise individual. Another, and not an unusual cause of accidents, arises from the temerity, or rather roguery of the (so called) engineer. I have already mentioned the wonderful '*cuteness*' for which these people are remarkable, and also the rapidity with which they seem to acquire a knowledge of any business or profession in which they intend to embark ; thus it happens that, on these great western waters, many a man who has acquired no further knowledge of a steam-engine than that which can be picked up by acting as *stoker* for a voyage or two, passes himself off as a first-rate engineer, and risks the lives of hundreds of human beings by his unprincipled duplicity.

The *snags* and *sawyers*, which, though every effort is made to keep them down, are constantly rearing their treacherous heads an inch or so above the water, and threatening destruction to life and

property, claim a conspicuous place in the catalogue of river dangers. The thick fogs, too, which sometimes hardly clear up for days together, are a fruitful source of danger, causing collision with other rapidly steaming boats, running ashore, and all kinds of mishaps. Last, but not least, the unfortunate habit which prevails, of every passenger rushing to the same side of the vessel directly she touches the landing, ought to be mentioned. This simultaneous movement, by its causing her to lug over on one side, causes more explosions than can easily be believed, and, as a proof of it, I may mention that accidents of this description occur much more frequently close to the landings, than they do elsewhere.

I have already told you that the steamer was very crowded, and also that the company was none of the best; nevertheless, there was one party on board as different from the rest of the society as elegance of manner and refinement of feeling could possibly make them. We soon found that we were acquainted with some of their relations, and also that we had several mutual friends, so that the prospect of having such agreeable companions all the way down to New Orleans, made us look upon the voyage almost as a party of pleasure. There was also among the company a very agreeable Kentuckian, who was full of anecdotes and interesting tales of the early struggles

between the Whites and the Indians, on 'The Bloody Ground,' as a part of Kentucky is called.

Just as it was growing dusk we passed 'Big Bone Lick Creek,' near to which are some celebrated sulphur springs. It is here that the bones of that wondrous beast, the Mammoth, have been found of the greatest size and in the largest quantities. There is a curious tradition among the Delaware Indians, which, in their poetical idiom, would sound of course much better than I can repeat it to you. But here it is, as well as I can tell it.

The mammoths, according to the Delaware historical authorities, formerly existed in vast numbers, and their appetites being proportioned to their size, the ravages they made in the hunting-grounds of the red men caused them serious inconvenience and distress. Now, it happened that *Manitou*, the Great Spirit of the Indian tribes, looked with an eye of pity upon the misfortunes of the virtuous, but unfortunate Delawares, and determined to rid them of their foes. With his destructive lightning in his hand, he left his abiding place, and descended to a rock, near the haunts of the destructive mammoths. On that rock, the Great Spirit rested for awhile, and on its adamant surface were pointed out the marks made by his feet, as he waited there for a favourable opportunity to pounce upon his victims. But soon the glancing

lightning darted among them, and the destructive bolts fell thick and fast. At length, the herd, (numerous as it was,) lay in dead heaps upon the plain, all except one monstrous bull, the leader and grandsire of the herd, who continued to present his broad, and iron forehead to the shafts, and to shake them off harmlessly as they fell ; but the energy and foresight of this Napoleon of the mammoths failed him at last. One missile was unparried by his opposing front, and he fell, wounded in the side ; but it was evident that the weapon was not yet in existence which was destined to put an end to the great champion of the mammoths. Up he rose from the blood-besprinkled plain, and waving his tail contemptuously at his foe, he bounded away. The Ohio was cleared with a spring ; the Wabash and Illinois were left miles behind, and he never drew breath till he reached the Great Lakes, where he still lives and flourishes.

The Delawares have an idea that the mammoth was a beast of active habits, keen perceptions, and addicted to the devouring of animal food ; but among the *Shawnee* Indians, where the organic remains of the huge monsters have likewise been discovered, the creature is thought to have been a slow, heavy, awkward, animal, very much resembling an overgrown hog, inasmuch as he had long hanging ears, and little miserable eyes, and was of a dirty mouse-colour. Moreover, they affirm that

he fed entirely upon vegetable food, particularly delighting in the luxury of soft wood, and sometimes eating up whole trees, root, branch, and trunk.

There was once, it is said, a *scientific* English traveller, who carried off bones out of the 'Big-bone Lick' by wagon-loads, and shipped them off to his native country. *He* declared that the mammoth was of the same species as the lion, and his account of the antediluvian animal is very amusing. He says, that 'His shoulder-blade was of the size of a *breakfast-table*; that he was sixty feet in length, and twenty-five feet in height; that his *figure* was magnificent,—his looks determined,—his gait stately,—and his voice tremendous. So much for the mammoth, and the legend of Big-bone Lick.

There was a most uncivil white stewardess on board the 'Ben Franklin,' with whom I *could* have showed myself very angry, if such an indulgence of my indignation would have done the slightest good, or procured us one of the many comforts of which we were in want. There was neither jug nor basin in my berth, no towels, or any, in short, of the appliances or means by which the most commonplace toilet is effected. In the desperation of the moment, I forgot I was on board the 'Republican Ben Franklin,' and called in a somewhat peremptory manner for the 'stewardess.' No reply of any kind was vouchsafed, so I went up to her,

and informed her, in civil terms, that I wanted basins, towels, and hot-water. I wish you could have seen the surprise that was depicted on every face, and the way in which (without moving from her rocking-chair) she ejaculated 'What say?' I repeated my request in my blandest manner, foreseeing that my demand, being evidently an unusual one, would occasion an expression of surprise at least, if nothing more. 'Well, that beats the Union!' said the stewardess, in reply. 'You *must* be dirty, I expect, to want to wash this time o' night. I guess you'll have to wait till morning, and then wash with the others, in the washing-room. You'll have to make haste though, and you'll have your turn right away, for only *three* can go in at once.' Oh, horror of horrors! A washing-room in an American steamer, and that steamer the 'Ben Franklin!' I saw directly in the obstinate eye of that spiteful stewardess, that both menaces and entreaties would be thrown away upon her. There was but one way of softening the wicked determination of leaving me to my fate to which she had arrived, and that was, the application of a little *soft sawder*. The form in which I administered it is one which I have scarcely known to fail. So without allowing her to work herself into a passion, I tried the universal panacea of a dollar, which soon cured her of her obstinacy, and procured me (after a few more ejaculations of wonder,

and inquiries if I wanted the things ‘fixed right away’) the possession of the coveted articles.

I had the curiosity, before I left the steamer, to look into the above-named ‘washing-room,’ the place where almost all my female fellow-passengers had performed their scanty ablutions. There stood the vaunted *three* basins, *there* the *one* towel, and, suspended against the wall, was *the* comb! Such a combination of horrors almost made me wish myself back again among the pigs of Cincinnati. The ‘washing-room,’ with all its disgusting details, was formerly invariably found in all the western steamers; but now—thanks to Mrs. Trollope and other writers, and to the rapid march of civilization—it is very rare to meet with these public places for ablution in the better class of vessels.

The cabins are very comfortable, and are provided with every article necessary for cleanliness, and, moreover, the beds are much broader, softer, and more endurable than they are apt to be on board any other kind of ‘floating prison.’

It was about seven o’clock in the morning when we reached Louisville, and glad enough we were to leave the steamer, and the greater proportion of its occupants. Among them there was a newly-married couple, who were passing what appeared to be (without exaggeration) their ‘treacle,’ or rather their *molasses* ‘moon,’ with apparently great satisfaction to themselves. It is very usual for

happy brides and grooms to spend this interesting period of their married life on board one or other of the great steamers plying up or down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. To a stranger, and above all, to an Englishwoman, this habit seems both strange and indiscreet. Exhibitions of conjugal attentions are not generally agreeable to lookers-on, and however much the principal actors in the 'comedy of the Honeymoon' may, in the first burst of matrimonial zeal, glory in the possession of a devoted heart, and in the bliss of reciprocal affection, the saloon of a crowded steamer is not (at least in my opinion) the proper theatre for its display. A bride in America is quite a public spectacle, for immediately after the performance of the marriage ceremony, (which, by the way, is very little of a ceremony after all,) she comes forth into society in all her splendour; the richest ornaments which the *corbeille de mariage* can boast, are heaped upon her person, and instead of retiring from observation for a season, she remains 'in town,' and the day after she has become a wife, enters her 'parlour' in all her 'braverie,' to receive a perfect levee of friends and acquaintances, who, according to the rules of strict *etiquette*, pour in to offer their congratulations on the interesting occasion.

With *us*, who, as a people, (I mean the female half of it,) are generally fated through life to see

so much more of our husbands than falls to the lot of most American wives, I dare say that the suppression of honeymoon retirement would, on the whole, be a measure fraught with excellent policy. I am convinced that married lovers in England make most dangerous discoveries by dint of *boring* each other during their month of enforced seclusion ; whereas they might, under more propitious and less trying circumstances, continue in their mutual and very desirable delusions for years to come. Still, with all its manifold disadvantages, I prefer our English plan to that adopted by the Americans. Talleyrand's famous advice of '*n'ayez pas de zèle,*' would be very properly addressed to American brides and Benedicks, for who can deny that it is (to speak mildly) in very bad taste to display, for the edification of a crowd of indifferent spectators, feelings which ought to be sacred to *one* alone, and this, as it appears to me, merely for the sake of showing to the world how very fond married people *can* be of one another—for a fortnight ?

The snow was falling in large flakes, obscuring every object, and throwing a white mantle over the streets of the town, when we reached Louisville ; it was, as I said before, seven o'clock in the morning—the most comfortless *arriving hour* that I know of. The dreary wintry light of day was just

beginning to break, and the freezing north wind was blowing keenly and biting through the streets, and particularly round the corners. After leaving the steamer, we toiled up a steep ascent, and through some wind-swept streets, which at that early hour were wretched in their snowy silence, and at last reached the hotel, and called for breakfast.

The Galt House was the name of our hotel, and it is associated in my mind with everything that is wretched, gloomy, and depressing. Not that there was anything really to complain of, or that the rooms were more comfortless, or the beefsteaks harder than usual; but we had not yet become accustomed to gritty corn-bread, which tasted and looked as if a straw bonnet had been hastily chopped up, and mixed with the usual quantity of *dough-doings*: nor was the aspect of the large half-furnished bed-room into which we were shown, and which had no better view from its windows than some red tiles, calculated to impress us with a favourable opinion of the place.

To our great dismay, we were told that there was no really good and first-class steamer at Louisville on her way to New Orleans. Plenty of bad ones—dozens of dangerous boats, all ready for explosion, with over-worked boilers, and loafing crews, but not one that could be depended on, as

at all likely to carry us in safety through the dangers we should have to encounter. This was despair indeed! Louisville appeared to us such a deplorable and desolate spot to be stranded upon; and moreover there was the chance of ice accumulating, and of the rivers becoming so low as to put a stop to navigation altogether for weeks, or perhaps months to come. In short, we saw everything *en noir*, (excepting the great white letters on the door, advising us, as usual, to beware of thieves, and which was the only thing, in fact, we had to read,) and we sat in this manner for hours, with the thick and heavy snow descending *without*, and *our* minds within kept in a most disagreeable state of suspense, and hardly conscious whether our hopes or fears were uppermost.

We were at last roused into exertion by one of our late pleasant companions in the 'Ben Franklin,' who had, in the most unselfish manner possible, and at the risk of losing his own passage, run up, and knocked with breathless haste at our door, to give us the welcome intelligence that the 'Leonora,' a first-rate steamer, had just touched at Louisville, and that if we set off to join her, without an hour's delay, we might be so fortunate as to secure a passage in her for New Orleans. I need not say that we required but little pressing, and that in almost as short a space of time as it

takes to write it, we were on our road to the steam-boat.

The first thing to do was to obtain a carriage, and then, as we found that we had half an hour to spare, to desire our black charioteer to drive us through the town, and also to one or two *stores* at which we were desirous of purchasing some materials for amusement during the long and monotonous voyage which we had before us. Our first visit was to a book-store, where we found, as we expected, all the newest and best European novels, selling for twenty-five *cents* each, about a shilling. Having selected about a dozen volumes of *light literature* to beguile the tedium of the way, we next repaired to a 'work-shop:' one of those stores where ladies lay in stocks of crochet-needles and purse-silk, and which are now to be found *almost* everywhere in the world. From the strange and out-of-the-way places in which I have met with 'Berlin patterns' and 'German wools,' I am convinced, that I should not now be surprised to find an embroidery shop in Lapland, or even in the dominions of Queen Pomaré. Having procured what we were in search of, we took a cursory view of the town, and after making all due allowances for the snow, and our somewhat jaundiced state of feeling, I am inclined to consider that we were justified in our indifferent opinion of

Louisville. The city looks dull and sleepy, the streets are very irregular, and the aspect of the whole place was infinitely less prosperous than that of any of the other large cities we had previously visited.

We saw no cause to regret that our stay at Louisville was limited to *one hour*, but hurried down joyfully to Portland, where the 'Leonora' was lying, at a distance of about two miles from the hotel. At Louisville are the *falls* of the Ohio, which, though they have much more the appearance of *rapids*, are sufficiently formidable to form an obstruction (and almost the only one) to the navigation of the Ohio. The obstacle, however, only exists when the river is in a very low state; and to obviate the necessity of transshipping merchandize from one vessel to another, (an operation which was formerly often necessary,) a canal has been constructed at an enormous expense from Louisville to Portland. This canal is of sufficient width for the largest steamers to pass through it, and throughout the greatest part of its extent has been cut out of the solid rock. The 'Leonora' is quite a new boat, and has a careful and attentive captain, and moreover, (and what is of still greater importance,) she draws but four feet of water. This, as the rivers are much more than usually low, is, as I am told, a most important circumstance, and one

which we shall, doubtless, very soon learn to appreciate at its proper value.

The 'Leonora' proved, on a nearer inspection, worthy of all the commendations that had been bestowed on her ; we found that there were not a great many passengers, and also that very few of them were ladies. The party I have before alluded to, with ourselves, constituted almost the entire society in the 'ladies' saloon,' and as soon as I had (to use an American expression) *realized* the pleasant circumstances in which our fates had placed us, I began to look forward to the long and, in most cases, tiresome river voyage, with feelings of satisfaction of quite a novel description.

I have rarely felt more intense cold than that which we endured as we scrambled down the steep and rugged bank to the deck of the steamers. Ankle deep in snow, we struggled on to the slippery plank placed to facilitate our coming on board, and were at last rewarded for our exertions by finding ourselves in a warm and most comfortable saloon. The first thing necessary on these occasions is to choose one's 'state room,' as the berths are called. According to my experience, the great desideratum is to be as far *aft* as possible ; the worst possible place being that next the paddle-box, where you have not only to suffer from incessant noise, but also from absence of light, and are, moreover, (in

case of *explosion*,) nearer to the post of danger. The next object of an experienced traveller is to lay hands on a rocking-chair, there being generally not more than two or three in the saloon, and every other seat being to the last degree uncomfortable. In ten minutes time from the moment of our embarking we were under weigh, and going at the rate of ten knots an hour. We have now been two days on board, and as I find there is an opportunity of sending off this long letter, I shall take advantage of it.

LETTER XXVI.

EMIGRANTS AND DECK PASSENGERS — RUNNING
A-GROUND—TRAVELLED AMERICANS—LOW RATE
OF FARES — REFRACTORY MULES — STEAMBOAT
SHARPERS—‘LA BELLE RIVIÈRE’—OHIO BOAT-
MEN — FLOATING IN — MELANCHOLY CATAS-
TROPHE—DINNERS ON BOARD THE ‘LEONORA.’

‘*Leonora*’ Steamer—November.

I WISH I could give you an idea of our aquatic *drawing-room*, and our peculiar mode of life. The only discomfort of which I feel inclined to complain is the disagreeable heat of the *immediate* neighbourhood of the stove, and the intense cold when one is only three yards away from it. At the large *bow window* in the stern it is freezing hard, but the view from it is the only glimpse we catch of the outer world, so there, till we are fairly driven back by the cold, we generally ensconce ourselves. It is curious to watch the waters as they are cleft by our vessel in her rapid progress, and to see the *receding* of the trees, and the chance houses which disappear as suddenly as though we were gazing at them from a railroad carriage. And then every five or ten minutes we see other steamers

come swiftly by, with their ‘snort, snort, snort!’ and their rush along the water; and by the time a very few of these *stentorious* breathings have made themselves heard, the huge boat is far away up the stream, out of sight and hearing.

When evening closed in, our saloon had really a look of comfort; the warm red curtains were drawn round the stern window, and the hard pillowless circular sofa was exchanged for the rocking-chairs round the stove; and here we had amusements in the shape of ‘books, and works, and *healthful play*:’ our enjoyments in the latter species of pastime being, however, limited to an occasional game of vingt-et-un, with Peccan nuts taking the place of the current coin of the republic. The *Leonora* being so newly built, everything was neat and clean on board; a bright red carpet, of home manufacture, covered the deck, and nothing about it gave tokens of its having been *used* by the natives of the country.

We did not progress *very* expeditiously, and compared with the usual rate of distance made in an hour by these river steamers, (sixteen, eighteen, or twenty knots an hour being not at all uncommon,) our *eight* seemed very moderate. But as an excuse for our comparatively slow progress, I must tell you that great caution was required on the part of the captain to prevent our vessel running a-ground: it was evident that he preferred safety

to expedition, for he was constantly dwelling on the necessity of *feeling our way* instead of going recklessly a-head. The current runs with tremendous force, and once driven on a hidden bank, when going at full speed, it is a very difficult matter to get off again into deep water. We had a few bullocks on board, who were on their way to one of the large towns not very much above New Orleans, and the weight of which ponderous beasts contributed to sink us several inches lower in the water than we should otherwise have been. We had also some horses and mules, and a vast number of what are called 'deck passengers.' The latter consisted principally of emigrants from Ireland, *loafing* characters from the north, and German settlers with a very small amount of money in their pockets. The part of the vessel which they occupied was tenanted only by themselves, and the four-footed animals I have before-mentioned. It was exposed to all the inclemency of the season, and in the inclement weather which had set in their sufferings, particularly those of the women and children, were very severe.

When we left Louisville, we had rather more than fifteen hundred miles to travel on these giant rivers—the Ohio and the Mississippi, and the distance altogether from Brownsville to New Orleans is a voyage of only two or three hundred miles less than that across the Atlantic from

England. You will think that I speak very disrespectfully of a 'hundred miles, more or less,' but the truth is, that one grows very reckless of odd *hundreds* while calculating distances on this gigantic scale. The river voyage would (we were aware, notwithstanding the advantages of smooth water and high pressure engines) occupy a much longer space of time than we passed on the Atlantic passage. On the latter, as a set off to its head winds and giant waves, there are happily no *stopping places*, no taking in of fuel, and, more than all, no *running aground*. To the latter inconvenience, from its happening, on an average, three times a day, we soon became accustomed.

The snow, for the first few days, fell fast, often hiding the banks from our view, and (what *might* have been of much more consequence) preventing our seeing the approach of other vessels. During all this time, we were compelled to endure racking headaches from the pernicious fumes of the stoves, and to submit to close confinement in our own quarters, from the impossibility of allowing the door of the gentlemen's (?) saloon to be left open. *Their* amusements were truly those of the western world—namely, playing at cards with remarkably dirty packs, smoking cigars, using violent language, and drinking brandy, and other 'fancy cocktails,' from morning till night.

We often had three or four steamers meeting or

passing us at the same time, their decks generally crowded, and their loud *bellows*-like sound giving due warning of their approach. As I said before, in spite of all the precautions that were taken, we were very often stuck fast in the middle of the stream. On these occasions it often happened that the efforts to get our steamer afloat again were unsuccessful for hours together. We were always warned when our progress was about to be delayed in this unsatisfactory manner by a little peculiar quiver in the motion of the vessel ; then there came a slight shock, and a universal cry of, ' Here we are, a ground again ! ' The first proceeding on these occasions was to let off the steam, and every possible measure was by turn resorted to in the hope of ' getting us off,' and into active motion once more. Incessantly rang the ship's bells for the working of either starboard or port paddle, as the case might be ; but often and often all the measures tried were, for a length of time, ineffectual, and we lay till our patience was well nigh exhausted, a motionless log on the bosom of the waters.

The most approved mode of getting the steamer off, was by means of two or three large spars, pointed with iron, and about thirty feet long ; these were stuck out on the shallow side, and extended well over the vessel's bows towards the deep water. The power made use of to ' shove off' with

these huge boat-hooks was the windlass, and a rope leading twice or thrice backwards and forwards through blocks, one of which was at the boat's gunwale, and the other at the outward extremity of the spars. This process often proved ineffectual, and we were frequently reduced to the necessity of sending to the nearest *wooding place* in order to procure a flat or raft, for the purpose of getting out a part of the cargo, and thus lightening the vessel sufficiently to float her off. It was very provoking, while thus *fixed*, to see other steamers, more fortunate than ourselves, puffing and panting past us, those on board rather rejoicing at than sympathizing with our forlorn situation. As to expecting any help from the steamboats passing by, it was quite out of the question; although, in most cases, a very little assistance from a vessel under weigh would have soon towed us off, we knew too well the jealousy that exists between the rival boats to entertain for a moment the idea that any help would be vouchsafed to us. The great object of all these boats is to procure *cargo*, and, with this end in view, they of course endeavour, as much as possible, to outstrip each other, and arrive first at the town or *landing* where cotton, molasses, or other cargo is likely to be ready for them.

It not unfrequently happened that we passed steamers which, like our own, had been unlucky enough to get aground, and great was the *triumph*-

ing on board when we chanced to find one which had passed us by when in the like unpleasant situation.

It was fortunate for us that our party on board was a pleasant one, for if it had been otherwise, the confinement and the sameness of the routine of our daily life would have been almost unbearable. We had a great many books amongst us—indeed, it is one of the best privileges of America, that literature, besides being a cheap luxury, is at the same time a very portable one. Our companions had travelled, and thoroughly enjoyed, and were fully capable of appreciating, the various objects of curiosity and places of interest which they had visited during a lengthened sojourn in most of the countries of Europe. When this is the case with Americans, and when they have had their national prejudices (what one must call) *scrubbed* off, for the process of *rubbing* would be one of much too mild a character to effect the desired end, I know *no* people more delightful. It is, I fancy, often a rude, and in many cases a painful process thus to cleanse away the ‘perilous stuff’ of hardened prejudice and inveterate nationality which encrusts itself round the hearts and ideas of Americans who have never stirred from their own continent. The terrible prejudices which grow up at home are in their case strengthened by a want of near contrast, and by a thousand egotistical feelings which are born

with them, and which are too agreeable to be willingly parted with. But let an intelligent American (and they are most of them intelligent) set out on what they call the grand tour, let him mix with the well-informed and intelligent of other countries, and the result almost invariably is, that his natural tact (for in this valuable gift they generally abound) will lead him to imitate what is good, and reject the bad; and finally to return to his own prosperous land more alive, even than formerly, to her real advantages, but at the same time fully aware of imperfections of which he was before ignorant, and willing to confess that she is not yet '*the greatest country on 'arth.*'

Whenever I make an acquaintance with an American, my first object is to discover whether he has ever been in Europe. To do this is generally no very difficult task, for not only are they fond of mentioning their travels and talking of what they have seen and done in the old world, but there is generally a something in the manner and appearance of an American who has 'seen the world,' which distinguishes him greatly from those who have never been out of the Union. It is not *always* that Americans will allow that other nations besides themselves can boast of any freedom, or, indeed, of any merit of any kind whatsoever. Beauty of scenery they also choose to think is only to be found in the Union; and as to intelligence, internal

strength, and weight among nations, they seem to imagine that there can be no dispute about it; but that the Americans can with justice lay claim to being *more* learned, *more* powerful, and altogether *more* extraordinary than any other people in the world. This conviction, on one side, naturally puts a limit to conversation, and therefore I aver that though Americans are generally eminently agreeable as companions *after* they have become *degourdis* by an intercourse with Europe and Europeans, they are often quite the contrary before.

The number of mules we had on the lower deck amounted to about thirty; they had been shipped from Kentucky, and were to be delivered at a sugar plantation a short distance above New Orleans. The creatures were of a very large and handsome breed, and withal extremely vicious and difficult to manage, if we might judge from the incessant *stable-like* noise which ascended to us from the regions they inhabited. Throughout the day, and during every hour of the otherwise quiet night, did those wicked brutes neigh and kick and plunge, till sometimes it really seemed as if a whole herd of mustangs* had been let loose among us. The noise and uproar made by these vicious animals was not rendered more endurable by the mingling with it of horrid oaths and abuse

* Wild Mexican horses.

on the part of the men who had them in charge; altogether, the near neighbourhood of so many animals caused us often to regret, for our own sakes, the extremely low rate at which cattle and live stock of all kinds can be conveyed down the great western rivers—I believe the charge the whole way down from Louisville or St. Louis to New Orleans is only four dollars a-head. Were the rate of passage money a little higher, our nights might, perhaps, have been quieter, nor would the air on deck, and even in the cabin, have been so completely impregnated with the odour of a not very well kept farm-yard, as we often found it to be.

A great deal has been said about the extreme danger attending a voyage down the Mississippi in one of the high-pressure boats, and I even recollect that our captain (when we were crossing the Atlantic) declared that he would prefer running the risks of winter passages on *his* line of waters, than incur the dangers of *one* Mississippi trip. There can be no doubt that it *is* 'risky;' and that the accounts of the fatal accidents which occur are not much exaggerated; but then it must be recollected that the steamers are almost *innumerable*, and that, among so many, some *must* come to an untimely end. Still, with the possibility, or indeed probability of being either burnt, drowned, 'snagged,' or 'sawyered,' hanging over our heads,

(of which we *might* have been kept in continual remembrance by the ominous life-preservers in our state-rooms,) I do not think that it ever occurred to any of our cheerful little party that they *ought* to be nervous, or that we ever called to mind the perils by which we were surrounded.

Some time ago, steam-boat accidents were much more frequent than they are now—so much so, that the government were at last roused to a sense of the necessity of their interference. Some regulations were then made, and *inspectors* of machinery appointed, by whose instrumentality and *surveillance* it was thought that the safety of the travelling public might be secured. I understand, however, that the improvement and additional security in the steamers (if there be any) can in nowise be attributed to the exertions or watchfulness of these government functionaries, who are said to *perform* their very responsible duties by merely making the trifling exertion of going on board the boats, and then, without wasting time on troublesome scouting, drinking ‘slings’ and ‘juleps’ *ad libitum*.

In cases of explosion, it is those who are in the *fore*-part of the vessel who run the greatest danger: thus it is that the *ladies*, whose saloon is farther *aft*, so often escape to describe the scene of horror, while the husbands and brothers, who have instinctively rushed forward to ‘see what is the matter,’ become involved in the general wreck, and never

return to make known the result of their inquiries. I have heard frightful descriptions of these awful occurrences, cases where the fore-part of the vessel has been forced away from the stern cabins, leaving the bereft, and miserable occupants to all the uncertainty and helplessness of a situation which *may* be imagined, but to which no pen can do justice.

We placed implicit reliance on the word of the captain, who assured us that *his* 'ingines' were 'first-rate,' and quite new, so that, whatever other accident might befall us, the bursting of the boilers was not to be anticipated. We had only one alarm of this nature, but though proceeding from a ludicrous cause, it was enough to make the timid ladies 'shriek,' and the 'brave,' instead of 'standing still,' rush forth to see 'what was going on.' The case was this. One afternoon, we were suddenly startled by a *new noise*. Now, a sound to which one has not been accustomed, is, I think, on board a steamer, rather an agitating thing, implying generally an accident of some kind or other. On this occasion we were not kept long in suspense as to the cause, for the *new noise* was speedily followed by an equally unprecedented sight. In a moment, a rush of water deluged the saloon, and a burst of steam rendered every object it contained indistinct. What it all meant, we could not imagine, and, poor helpless women that we were, we were left very long to our fears, and our uncer-

tainties, for no one of our emissaries seemed inclined to return, or even to *send* us any information. At last, we arrived at the truth of the matter, which was simply this. One of the refractory mules had escaped from its confinement, and being, as it appeared, in an investigating mood, had ventured to a part of the vessel where no mule had any business to be, and, while careering about in joy at its recovered freedom, had contrived to turn, with its awkward hoofs, some important portion of the engine machinery, (*what*, I know not,) and thus to *turn on* the steam, all over the ship.

We often came to an anchor during the night, and seldom, during the hours of darkness, went at more than half speed, so that, what with these prudent delays, and the hours we spent aground, our progress was slow indeed. Our time by day was passed in reading, distorting skeins of silk, and bunches of beads, into all imaginable forms, talking (not *scandal*, for the number of our mutual *friends* was very limited), and walking, when the weather permitted, on the hurricane deck.

There is often very high, and also very dishonest play on board these steamers. I believe, however, that this evil has lately been somewhat remedied, and that the gangs of sharpers and knowing hands who formerly infested the river steamers—plying their odious trade with great emolument to themselves, and utter ruin to the pockets and morals of

their victims—have diminished in numbers, and turpitude. There are still, however, quite enough remaining, to render caution very necessary, for the stake played for is almost invariably high, and *loafing* characters are still extremely cunning in the art of turning all the luck on their own side.

The hurricane deck is not well adapted for the purposes of a promenade. It is difficult of access, as we are obliged to clamber up the paddle boxes, in order to arrive at it, and when there, it is not very satisfactory to walk on a sloping roof, slippery with ice, and destitute of any guard or gallery between one's precious self and the watery waste below. All these combined disadvantages were sufficient (except on very tempting days, of which we had remarkably few) to prevent the ladies from taking exercise in the open air: some of the gentlemen, however, continued to brave the dangers and disagreeables of the place, and paced for hours on the slippery roof.

The Ohio is certainly a beautiful river, but after journeying on it for a few hundred miles, one grows quite tired of the monotony and sameness of the scenery. We were also disappointed in the colour of the 'crystal stream,' which, though certainly not like the running mud of the Mississippi, is nevertheless indebted to its contrast with that thickly flowing river, for the many praises and compliments it has received. Our captain, who

seems very tenacious of the character for *limpidity* of 'la belle rivière,' assures me that the muddiness of the waters is owing to the washing away of the banks, caused by the waves of the constantly passing steamers. Every now and then we pass one of the huge 'flats' laden with coal, or perhaps corn. Many of the farmers in the Northern States, instead of dispatching their produce by steam, in charge of a *super-cargo*, prefer building a raft or flat, and thus carrying their own produce to market. After their crops are got in, they have several months of leisure, during which time there is but little to be done on their farms, so that they can afford time to combine both business and pleasure by navigating their own unwieldy crafts down to New Orleans.

The professional boatman are a very lawless and rowdy race, 'up,' as the song says, 'to ebbery ting.' In former days, while the forests were still forests, and the Indians were not yet driven away from the banks of the Ohio, the life of the boatmen must have been both exciting and romantic. *Then*, there was no better way of travelling up and down the rivers than on the slow-going, and often very dangerous flat-boats, which plied upon them: a temporary shed was erected for the accommodation of the women and children, and great were the sufferings and privations to which they were often exposed. An old traveller, who had lived in those

days, and who had, with his family, been more than once obliged to have recourse to this mode of travelling, described his voyages to me in a most graphic manner. According to him, there was formerly much *poetry* in the life of the Ohio boatmen. Music was often heard echoing from the distant bluffs, and merry laughs resounded along the shore, and laughing girls came down to the water's-edge, to greet the boatmen as they neared the bank. Sometimes the Indians would come down singly, or in bands, and offered them trifling articles, generally of food, for sale. The quaint, and original species of wit, peculiar to the western men, enlivened the voyage; and so did the dances and the cheerful sounds of the *fiddle*, to which the boatmen danced on the deck of their slowly-gliding craft.

Since that time many changes have taken place: the boats, now that the steamers have increased and multiplied so miraculously, have become less numerous, and the march of civilization has brought with it an increase of crime. Drunkenness is a vice which has taken strong hold on the Ohio boatmen; for whiskey is here as cheap and abundant as in the north, and their vocation is often a very laborious one. The race, in short, of these singular beings, is becoming gradually extinct, for I fancy they are hardly to be recognised

in the swearing, murdering, and violent men, who are sent in charge of the flat-boats to New Orleans.

I must now give you a specimen of the brutality of these Ohio boatmen, and also of the dreadful evils which the cheapness of *spirits* entails upon the lower classes in America. We were sitting in the saloon one morning after breakfast; it was a dull and heavy day, and the sky, surcharged with moisture, looked as if ready to hurl an avalanche of snow upon our heads: we were seated, as usual, round the stove, endeavouring to insinuate a little warmth into our shivering frames, and the gentlemen of our party were on the hurricane deck, watching the rapid progress of the steamer on her course, for we happened to be in deep water, and were going at the rate of sixteen knots an hour. The banks of the river were covered with snow, and the dismal looking forests had a slender white clothing on their leafless branches, which increased the gloom of their appearance by its shroud-like aspect. Now and then small sheets of ice came floating down, tossed about by the eddies, and crashed into pieces against the sides of our vessel. It was, indeed, a scene of perfect desolation, one worthy of being described by the author of 'Martin Chuzzlewit,' and the immortalizer of the renowned 'fever swamp.'

There we sat—patient, cold, and forlorn, but

quite unprepared for an event which shortly followed, and only congratulating ourselves that, for the moment at least, we were making rapid progress towards more civilized scenes. Suddenly we were startled by a loud splash in the water, which was followed instantaneously by the sharp, abrupt, and universal cry of 'A man overboard!' The steamer was instantly stopped, (in itself a dangerous proceeding, at the rapid rate at which we were going,) and a boat was immediately lowered, in the hope of rescuing the unfortunate individual (whoever he might be) from his otherwise inevitable fate. The horror of those first few moments of suspense will, I think, never be forgotten, either by myself or by my fair and gentle American companion. It was some time before our bewildered faculties began to comprehend it was '*only one of the deck passengers,*' and *not* one in whom we were deeply interested, that was at that moment struggling for life in the rapid current of the remorseless Ohio. The feeling of deep relief and gratitude which we (perhaps selfishly) felt, did not absorb us long; for we were soon standing at the stern-window, watching the progress of the boat, the crew of which were straining every nerve and muscle, in their efforts to reach the spot where they imagined the drowning man to be.

The captain himself was in the boat, for the moment the alarm was given he had sprung into

her, hatless and coatless, with two of his crew. We soon perceived, from the station we had taken up, a man a little a head of the boat, who was swimming lustily against the current, and who, as it appeared to us, was using his best endeavours to reach the shore, and *not* the boat which was sent to his rescue. Near to the struggling wretch there was a flat boat, with its crew of drunken and disorderly ruffians, who, though they would not have put themselves much out of their way to save any one's life, *did* make the exertion of hooking the drowning man up, as he was swimming past them, and, with many an unfeeling jest, *jerking* him into the boat belonging to the steamer. It was an indescribable relief when we saw him placed securely in the bottom of the boat, and we kept our eyes anxiously fixed upon the movements of the little craft as she neared the steamer, for it was, of course, quite uncertain whether life yet remained in the poor creature we had seen taken out from the ice-cold water.

The boat was now within twenty yards of the steamer, and many a hand was already extended to afford assistance, and many a kind heart beat fast with nervous expectation, when, with a suddenness of motion which defied all precautionary measures, the rescued man raised himself in the boat, and, before it was possible to be even aware of his intention, had thrown himself over the side !

Again all was confusion and dismay; the captain, with the most merciful and praiseworthy perseverance, rowed again towards him. There he was, once more battling with the waters, with the ice circling round him, and his own efforts evidently exerted to enable him to reach the shore. It was plain to all of us that his strength was now becoming exhausted by his exertion, for when the boat was within a yard of him, he sank below the surface of the stream. He rose again, and so near that the captain caught him by a portion of his clothing; it broke away, however, from his grasp, and again he sunk. Once more we saw him rise, and he was then within reach of the aforesaid flat boat, the crew of which *could* again have rescued him, without giving themselves the slightest trouble; their unwonted mood of humanity was, however, over—at least for that day, and they declined interfering. We could hear the captain's voice calling out to them for assistance. 'No,' cried one of them with a brutal oath, 'we took the tarnation fool out once, and you may do it yourself this time,' and with a loud, coarse laugh they continued their occupation. So the poor wretch sank at last, never to rise again; the waters closed over his head, and we saw the convulsive movements of his form no more.

Further delay was now useless, so leaving the watery grave, which we now feared was that of the

suicide, the captain ordered his boat's crew to row back to the 'Leonora,' and we were soon again on our way. On inquiry, we found that the drowned man had happily left neither wife nor child to bemoan his loss, and that the only relative he had on board the steamer was his brother. This man, a rough, uneducated back-woodsman, told us, by way of accounting for some strong symptoms of mental aberration which he had remarked in the conduct of the deceased, that 'he had lately *taken up* with religion,' a measure which he, in his benighted ignorance, seemed to consider sufficiently preposterous to account for everything he had done. It appeared that the miserable man had, for several days preceding, been labouring under a strong delusion that he had some violent and blood-thirsty enemies on board the vessel, and that his life was not safe as long as he remained in it. The brother assured us that, to the best of his belief, self-destruction was not aimed at by this poor deluded being, but that his object was to reach the river's bank, and thus effect his escape. Had he succeeded in this rash attempt, his fate would have been a dreadful one. Alone in those vast and trackless forests, in inclement weather, without shelter for his head, or any means of supporting existence, he must have died the miserable and lingering death of starvation. It was better as it was, and so we all agreed, as, with hearts saddened

by the mournful catastrophe we returned to our stove and our reflection. There was something very painfully shocking in the brother's fixed idea that religion (instead of a source of consolation and strength) had been the exciting cause of mental disease. That he had 'taken to preaching' was in itself, to the minds of those reckless men, a sufficient proof of insanity; nor did they give themselves the trouble to recollect that, previously to his having taken upon himself the office so reprobated by the rest, their wretched companion had, from excess of dissipation, been a sufferer from *delirium tremens*, that most common and fearful complaint in the Southern States of the Union.

Accidents from drowning are very common in these rivers, and it rarely happens that one or more persons do not fall victims to the remorseless current, during a trip up or down the Mississippi. The extremely crowded state of the lower deck, and the misfortune of its being almost on a level with the water, and totally destitute of bulwarks, are alone sufficient to account for these frequent disasters, without being obliged to take into consideration that generally deck passengers are more than half intoxicated, and that the only sober ones are helpless children, whose parents have frequently neither time nor inclination to look after them. The Yankees jest on every subject, and it became a standing joke, at the breakfast-table, to inquire of

the 'capern' how many of his passengers had been missed since the night before. To me, however, the waggery was anything but a lively one; for during many days after that event, I never heard a splash in the water without feeling sure that it was a human being, and if I missed any one in whom I was at all interested for ten minutes longer than usual, I immediately jumped at the conclusion that the strong Mississippi current was bearing him or her to darkness and to death.

The end of the gentlemen's saloon furthest from ours, is called 'Social Hall,' and was, in point of fact, a 'bar' where 'liquors' of all kinds, simple and compound, from gin-sling to sherry cobblers, could be procured. Considering the proximity of these incentives to mirth and ill-behaviour, it was wonderful how quiet our neighbours were. We have never been (since the first few days) disturbed by any sounds more offensive than occasional shrieks of laughter, or some other of the strange whooping, crowing noises, the production of which is an accomplishment in which the gentlemen from the far-west particularly excel.

The food is very good, considering the difficulties of obtaining anything tolerable, and the fact that there are considerably more than a hundred passengers to feed at least three times a day. Beefsteaks are, of course, the *piece de resistance*,

both at breakfast and supper : it is a favourite dish with the Americans, most of whom, when sending their plates for some of the dainty dish, particularly request to have it 'rare,' which, in English phraseology, signifies underdone. At dinner, we have roast turkeys and beef ; mutton we enjoy very seldom, and, moreover, it is always bad ; but of pigs we have a choice in various forms : sweet potatoes are the usual vegetable, and an indescribable pudding, served in saucers and eaten with molasses, winds up the repast. The tea is not good, neither is the milk and butter ; but these are luxuries so rarely to be met with in steamboats of any description, that their absence causes us no disappointment. The passage money from Louisville to New Orleans is, I think, astonishingly little, fifteen dollars a person being certainly a very small sum to pay for the enjoyment of the above luxuries, and for steam-travelling for more than fifteen hundred miles. I believe that not a few of the passengers hailed with delight the announcement of any fresh delay, preferring greatly to be kept at the cost of the steamboat captain. As I have an opportunity of sending off this letter, I shall write no more at present.

LETTER XXVII.

PASS CAIRO—ENTER THE MISSISSIPPI—PUBLIC OPINION — LAND AT MEMPHIS — DESCRIPTION OF THE MISSISSIPPI — ‘ WESTERN MEN ’ AT THE WOODING PLACE — VICKSBURG — THICK FOGS — TOUCH AT NATCHEZ—ARRIVAL AT NEW ORLEANS.

New Orleans—December.

FOR some hours previously to our arriving at the north of the Ohio, the scenery had rather improved in beauty. The shores became even somewhat rocky, and the difficulties of the navigation appeared to increase. We had been looking forward with raised expectations, to what we had weakly imagined would be a beautiful ‘ meeting of the waters ’ at Cairo, where the Ohio and Mississippi rivers unite, but alas ! our hopes were not realized. Cairo itself (a city it is called) consists of a few wretched looking wooden-houses, built on the *spit* of land between the two rivers : it is frequently under water for days together, and the only wonder is, that the good city of Cairo contrives to keep its station at all, and has escaped so long the fate of being washed away from the face of the earth by the force of the angry flood.

The scene altogether was one of desolation, nor did we require the recollection of some wrecked steam-boats, which we had passed a short time before, to come to the conclusion, that the water-logged town of Cairo was the head-quarters of gloom, fever, and depression.

And now we were fairly on the bosom of the 'mighty' Mississippi, that largest, and ugliest, and most tremendous of rivers; tremendous through the force of its resistless currents, and the fever-swamps that spread their noxious vapours over its surface. On we sped, *crashing* with great noise, shocks, and effort through the large masses of ice, with which the muddy surface of the river was crowded, but proceeding at a comparatively slow rate, from the hindrance that they threw in the way of our progress. After passing Cairo, we began to increase our cargo, and continued doing so all the way, by taking in large quantities of corn. Of course, by dint of these stoppages, our vessel was soon sunk much deeper in the water than was either beneficial or agreeable.

In this manner, and stopping at each, we passed Madrid, Troy, and other places, with grandiloquent and ancient names, but with a modern nothingness, which threw somewhat more than a *shade* of ridicule over these imposing appellations. In the neighbourhood of these newly-erected *cities*, we often found the humble abode of their original

founder and godfather; the name of his domicile being *Jacksonville, Williamsburgh, Thomsonville*, or the like: the love of handing down a name to posterity is, certainly, one of the most widely-spread weaknesses of our nature.

The cold, after leaving Cairo, was, for the first two or three days, intense; the quantity of ice on the rivers, and the constant snow-storms giving a wintry *feel* and *look*, that made us long greatly for a more southern clime, and lament more than ever the hours which we continued to spend aground.

It was impossible not to entertain a deep feeling of commiseration for the unfortunate *deck hands*, who were working their passages—poor creatures! down to New Orleans. For five days and nights had these miserable people been exposed to the inclemency of the weather, being hardly worked during the whole time; especially when the steamer happened to get a-ground. Their labour was so extremely severe, what with taking in wood, getting cargo on board, &c., and they seemed most of them so thoroughly worn out, that some of the ‘first-class’ passengers, at length, took pity on their hard fate. After communicating one with another, and inviting others to ‘express their sentiments,’ (for the importance attached to *public* opinion is well known in America,) a deputation was formed to wait upon the captain, and make known to him the disapprobation which the pas-

sengers felt bound to express, at the cruel and tyrannical manner in which the Irish and Germans on board were treated. The captain, after listening very patiently to the end of the harangue, made the following *humane* reply: ‘Well, by ——! if they don’t like it, they may just go ashore and be ——, nobody wants ’em to stop here.’ After this, there was nothing more to be said, but I could not help noticing the remark of one of the deputation, who, as he turned away, exclaimed—“Well, by ——! cap’em, if them wause *niggers*, you dar’n’t treat ’em as you do them poor devils.’ Does not this tend to prove how greatly the negro race are protected by the mighty shield of *public opinion*?

The banks, for the first two hundred and fifty miles down the Mississippi, were somewhat less level and monotonous than we had been led to expect they would be. The Chickasan Bluffs are really quite respectable heights, here, where there is so much that is ‘*flat*’ at least, if neither ‘stale’ nor ‘unprofitable.’ They consist of three or four ranges situated on the left bank of the river, and on the last of them stands the ‘city’ of *Memphis*. Anything more different than the Memphis before us, to the Egyptian city of columns and sphinxes, pyramids and porphyry domes, it would be difficult to conceive. The Memphis of the West differs in nothing from the other newly-raised

wooden cities which are for ever springing up on the banks of the rivers, though the *Mississippi* bears a greater resemblance to the lotus bearing Nile, than does this wooden city to the Memphis which history and our own imaginations have painted.

We found here a large cargo of freight, ready to be taken on board, so, as we were assured of an hour on shore, we agreed to take advantage of the delay, and visit this rapidly increasing, and rather prettily situated town. Of course, we all *fancied* that we were all in want of some indispensable article or other, which we thought might possibly be procured at a *dry goods* store at Memphis; so in spite of the cold and snow, and the steep and slippery banks, we set off to clamber up them to the *city*. There were two or three carriages, of rather a primitive description, driving and standing about, and in the main street, which fronts the river, are three or four deplorable looking stores, at which we could procure none of the things we wanted: so, after all, we found the best plan to pursue was to hurry back to the steamer, with a few bunches of frozen bananas, some sugar canes, and half a dozen pine-apples in the same state. We found, as we approached the water, that the ship's bell was already ringing for our recall, and it was well that our return was not longer

delayed, as—the passage-money having been paid—no great courtesy was wasted in waiting for lingering passengers.

The fruit we had brought on board was hailed with glee, as a sign that we were approaching a more genial climate, and indeed, after leaving Memphis, we had but little cause to complain of the cold.

We had now entered the cotton region, and the Mississippi had at length assumed its most odious aspect. There is, however, so much variety in this wonderful river, that it is unfair to associate it in one's mind *only* with ugliness and muddy banks. The Mississippi rises on high but marshy land, and runs through nineteen degrees of latitude. At its source the winters are cold and freezing as those of Lapland, while at its mouth they rival in mildness those of Madeira. At the former are found only the fir tree and the birch, while at the latter flourish the palm, the orange tree, and the sugar cane.

The upper part of this vast river, which is generally rendered unnavigable by reason of the ice, in the month of November, flows for the first four hundred miles through a high prairie country, until it is precipitated over the falls of St. Anthony; after this, it flows on for seven hundred miles through one of the most beautiful regions in the world, bordering the states of Wisconsin and Illi-

nois ; and eventually through a thousand miles of level *swamp*, till it falls into the sea at the Balize. After the junction of this mighty river with the *Missouri*, its waters assume a totally different character. Instead of being a softly flowing stream, with a sandy bottom, it becomes a wild, boisterous, boiling, devastating flood, dashing along between banks rendered desolate-looking by its overflowings, and by the ravages made by its impetuous current. My first attempt to drink the muddy water of the Mississippi was quite unsuccessful, and it was not till driven to do so by necessity that I could conquer my repugnance to swallow the dark brown, and earth-thickened fluid. The southerners, however, declare it to be possessed of almost medicinal qualities, so highly do they think of the wholesome nature of the Mississippi water. It is, indeed, an awful looking torrent, and no one who has *only* seen rivers which flow *rationaly* and calmly on, can form an idea of the swelling whirlpools which vex the surface of the Mississippi. These eddies rise with a whirling motion and considerable noise, often urging the boats away from their track. By the wonderful force of the current islands are torn up, sand-bars are displaced, and whole masses of soil, forming the bends of the river, (with the enormous trees growing upon them,) swept with resistless force into the stream.

The uniformity of the ‘points and bends,’ as

they are called in the country, is very remarkable. The deepest channel is *in* the 'bend,' and also the strongest force of the currents; and you may well understand that the resistless force of the river is constantly breaking away, and washing over, the soft and alluvial soil of which the yielding shore is formed. It is in the 'bends' that the appearance of the young and rapidly growing groves of cottonwood trees have often the most striking effect. These trees rise from the margin of the river, and are thus extremely diminutive, being only the growth of a few months; behind them are those which have sprung up some two years before, and so on in succession, till the growth of the trees arrives at its full and lofty height. You would not believe me, were I to tell you *how* rapidly these trees spring up, but I assure you that I believe all the wonders that are told of them and among them, that you may see a miniature forest where, a fortnight before, the soil was perfectly barren. The boatmen, as well as the Indians, often calculate distances by the number of the 'bends,' instead of having recourse to the more usual method of reckoning by miles and leagues.

Very soon after we left Memphis, the warm, damp, and, I think, unwholesome southernly wind began to blow, the air became oppressive, and continued fogs rendered our progress very slow; but one of the worst consequences attending this

change in the atmosphere was, that it caused the *pastoral* effluvia from the lower deck to be more disagreeable and offensive than ever.

As we descended the river, the state of Arkansas was on our right hand for several hundred miles. The general character of its inhabitants is none of the best, and it is acknowledged to be the refuge and head-quarters of *Loafers* and lawless characters of all kinds. In *Arkansaw* (as it is pronounced here) are also to be found the most numerous and accomplished professors in the art of using the bowie knife, and also of the ingenious one of gouging. We saw some curious specimens of the 'western men' at several of the *wooding places*; they are generally tall, lanky, unwashed men, with clay-coloured faces, looking for all the world as though they had been made out of the same mud that dyes the Mississippi waters. Their hair is commonly of a reddish flaxen hue, and hangs in uncombed masses over the coat collars; add to this, an old broad brimmed hat, with the crown half out, and boots of untanned leather, with the pantaloons tucked down in the inside of them, and a 'western man' is before you. These curious and original beings were generally accompanied by two or three dogs, and they are never known to move without a rifle and a bowie knife. The forests of Arkansas are said to be the favourite haunts of bears during certain seasons of the year, and the

creatures (it is affirmed) travel down from the north, a distance of several hundred miles, in order to luxuriate in these, their favourite swamps.

We had generally a scene of great excitement at the small towns we stopped at for *trading* purposes. Amongst our fellow-travellers were several keen speculators, who were eagerly on the watch for newspapers from 'the City,' in order to ascertain the price of corn there. When the desired information was obtained, there was a rush ashore, and very probably a bargain was immediately struck for fifty or a hundred bags of corn, which bags were, with incredible dispatch, shipped on board our steamer. *We* were often eagerly consulted as to whether it was probable the 'famine' in England would be so severe as to make 'corn' a profitable speculation, and it was often highly amusing to look on at their bargainings.

'Well, sir-r-r,' would the speculator say, addressing the farmer, over whom he was trying to 'come possom'—'Well, sir-r-r, I reckon you want to sell?'

Farmer: Guess I do.

Speculator: What may you want, sir-r-r? Forty cents, I expect?

Farmer: I calculate I'm bound to realize sixty.

Speculator: Too high, sir-r-r—too high.

Farmer: Well, sir, by the 'tarnal, I'll *make* pigs. And so they went on.

The twelfth day after leaving Louisville, we arrived at Vicksburgh, near to which place are some of the largest cotton plantations in the State of Mississippi. Vicksburgh itself is also a place of considerable importance, its population amounting to forty thousand souls. It is built on the side of a hill, and the first hundred yards of ascent to it was made through mud several inches (and in many places several feet) in depth. I never saw *any* so apparently *unfathomable*. The stores seemed, though well supplied with the *necessaries* of life, rather deficient in its luxuries, unless I may class under that head the variety of curious drinks which are advertised for sale at every other house. The supply of, and demand for, these liquors made, I have no doubt, plenty of work both for the doctors and lawyers, for, as far as I could judge, the business of Vicksburgh appeared to be almost monopolized by *drink*, *law*, and *physic*.

Perhaps, however, after all, I am doing the city injustice, as the arts and sciences did not seem to be entirely neglected within its limits. As a proof of this, I must tell you that I saw advertised a lecture on geology for one night, on electricity for another, and I cannot tell you on what learned matters besides. I was assured that the itinerant lecturers on these abstruse subjects are very successful in attracting numerous audiences; and that it mattered little whether the scene of their labours

was in the old established and thickly settled States, or in the forests of Arkansas, for that the wild back-woodsmen often travel long distances in the hope of picking up something new from these 'coons.' The 'coon' himself is generally a universal genius, and will lecture indiscriminately on any subject which he thinks likely to attract a large audience, it being evidently all the same to him whether the theme on which he harangues be *Temperance, Fourrierism, the Arts and Sciences*, or 'Things in General.'

The only tolerably pretty town on this part of the banks of the Mississippi is Natchez; it stands high, and near it are a succession of bluffs, or headlands, thirty or forty feet above the level of the river, and covered with trees of a beautiful growth and colour, which form an agreeable change after the low fever swamps, of which we had had so much more than enough.

At Natchez, our agreeable friends left us, greatly to our regret. We put them ashore at the landing of their own plantation, and it was pleasant to see the genuine and heartily-expressed joy of their negroes, who, being most of them old retainers of the family, came down in numbers to the river side to greet the return of their masters, and to be received by *them* with looks of pleasure, and by a hand cordially and kindly extended to each.

Our progress, since we left Vicksburgh, had been unavoidably delayed during the nights by the density of the fogs which (towards evening) almost constantly prevail in the lower part of the river. The immense number of the steamers passing up and down makes the chance of collision very great; and the course of the river is so tortuous that you are no sooner round one point, than the chances are that you have run well up on the opposite bank. Against the frightful dangers of collision all possible precautions are taken, and the ringing of the ship's bell through the dense and bewildering fog is incessantly heard; gigantic lamps are also generally suspended in conspicuous situations; these, however, are not often of much use, though a steam-boat captain once *had* the vanity to describe his 'shining light' after this wise. 'It wause,' he said, 'a perfect prairie on fire; I got it out once the darkest night that ever came over, and all creation *riz*, thinking it was daylight.' The greatest annoyance which was experienced, owing to the thickness of the atmosphere, arose from the difficulty of finding our wooding places, and we were often detained for hours together by the necessity of *feeling* our way along the banks.

After leaving Natchez, we soon found ourselves fairly among the orange-trees and the sugar canes: negro villages rose up on either shore, and huge

sugar houses, with here and there a planter's pretty house, attracted our attention. The day before we reached New Orleans, we got rid of the animals which had caused us so much annoyance. It was a long business, that of *persuading* the mules to go on shore, as, from the lowness of the river, they were obliged to walk over an extremely narrow plank, greatly to their own displeasure. One poor beast had its leg broken through its struggles, but the rest crossed the *bridge* in safety; and it was with unfeigned satisfaction that I saw them careering on the bank, and rejoicing in their liberty.

We were now nearing 'the city,' as New Orleans is called 'par excellence,' on the Mississippi river; and glad enough we were to feel that so it was, for we had been the almost unparalleled time of fifteen days in the steamer, and were thoroughly tired of the monotony of our life. 'It's a glorious place, stranger,' said a southerner to my companion, when, on the morning of the sixteenth day, the tall masts of the shipping, and the dome of St. Charles came in sight—'it's a glorious place—and an expansive country, I reckon! It can *swallow* Mexico, gouge both eyes out of Great Britain, and whip all creation! And yet, some folks say it is in danger. Danger!—why, I'd insure it myself for a quarter per cent., and include Texas and Oregon in the policy. Who's afraid!' The southern *gentleman*

was still continuing his speech, when, by slow degrees, the steamer neared the city, and at half-speed crept through the maze of shipping to the quay. An hour after, we were rattling along its well-known and badly-paved streets to the St. Louis Hotel, where we have taken up our quarters.

LETTER XXVIII.

ST. LOUIS HOTEL — DUELS IN THE SOUTH — IMPROVEMENT IN MANNERS AND CUSTOMS—LYNCH LAW — DESCRIPTION OF THE CITY — COUNTRY RIDES—NEW ORLEANS RACES—NEGRO JOCKEYS.

New Orleans—December.

WE were very fortunate in finding some excellent apartments vacant at St. Louis Hotel, and found no difficulty in making the necessary arrangements for *dieting* in our own rooms, whenever we felt inclined to do so. The ‘St. Louis’ is an enormous stone-building, and contains within its walls, not only the ‘City Exchange,’ but a fine ‘Rotunda’—as it is respectfully called: its dome is painted in fresco, and produces rather a good effect from the distance at which it is seen. In this Rotunda, *human* (as well as other) auctions are daily held; the walls are ornamented by portraits of those *great men* by whose magnanimous exertions the boon of *freedom* was obtained for America; and the privilege of beholding their benevolent countenances was, doubtless, duly valued by the slaves who had the *good fortune* to be sold in the Rotunda.

The 'St. Charles' Hotel' is the Astor House of New Orleans, and is much more frequented by men of business than *our* more quiet hotel ; it is also in a more central situation, which accounts for a portion of its noise. The 'St. Louis' is in the *French* quarter of the city, and, from being on so much larger a scale than its rival, is better adapted for the reception of *families*. The French and Spanish merchants appear to have adopted this hotel in preference to the St. Charles ; and it is seldom, at the table-d'hôte, that we hear the English language spoken.

The night after our arrival, a masked ball was given in the public Assembly Rooms belonging to the St. Louis, and, as we could witness the scene of gaiety without taking any more trouble than that of walking through a private door and passage close to our apartments, we went for a short time into the gallery, which overlooks the ball-room, and were greatly amused with all we saw. The 'Pol-kat,' 'Cat-chouka,' and the 'Crack-a-vein,' (*so* I have seen them *spelt* in the west,) were danced with a vigour which I have never witnessed, except in southern climates. The orchestra was a very tolerable one, and the company ostensibly well-behaved.

So many murderous and tragical scenes *have* been enacted at these balls, that there is now (I hear) an imperative order to search every gentle-

man before he enters the room, and this is done in order to discover any hidden arms which he may have about his person. The bowie knife—though a forbidden weapon, is generally overlooked on these occasions: it is almost always concealed *down* the back of the coat, the end of the hilt touching the collar, and quite within the owner's reach, should he find it necessary, or expedient, to use the weapon. Lawless and murderous deeds have, however, of late years been far more rare in this part of America than they formerly were: there was a time—and that not very far remote—when, even to go to the theatre was considered an act denoting extreme rashness of character, from the number of quarrels that were *picked*, and assassinations that were perpetrated there: and, as to the masked balls, they were, of course, far more 'risky,' and no persons, with any proper value for their own lives, ever thought of attending them at all.

Two or three days after our arrival a gentleman was shot in broad daylight at the entrance to our hotel, and the event, from peculiar circumstances, caused more excitement than such occurrences usually do in New Orleans. The individual who thus lost his life had long been a notorious character, as a confirmed bully and a first-rate shot. His adversary, with whom, as it appeared, he had had an inveterate and long-standing quarrel, had

been *properly* warned by the duellist in the usual form that he intended to 'use him up' at the first convenient opportunity. This, of course, put his intended victim on his guard, and *he* being a somewhat nervous man, his guard was proportionately watchful. I can imagine few situations much less agreeable than that of expecting to have, at any moment, the thrust of a bowie knife in one's side, or a pistol discharged at one's head. Talk of Damocles! his situation was a pleasurable one compared to the dangers which, in the shape of bowie knives and many barrelled pistols, haunted the imagination of this unfortunate citizen at every turn and corner of the street. Being, of course, ever on the *qui vive*, and with one eye, at least, always fixed on the movements of his redoubtable enemy, he perceived him, one eventful day, issuing forth from the St. Louis Hotel, with his hand in his breast-coat pocket. This was quite enough for the other, who, immediately jumping at the conclusion that it was *not* his handkerchief but his bowie knife that he was going to draw out, determined that he would run no unnecessary risk by delay, and taking a loaded pistol from his own pocket, shot the duellist through the heart. There never was any one so little regretted.

A duel of a more orthodox character took place a day or two after, between a young Englishman and an American residing in New Orleans, in which

encounter the latter was killed. The quarrel (which gave rise to a great deal of discussion at the time) originated in the St. Louis ball-room, and was caused by the wilful and vindictive spirit of a young lady, who protested that the Englishman had insulted *her* by placing his partner above her in the dance, and that *she would have satisfaction*. The result of her determination was, the untimely death of her countryman, which caused the bitterest grief to his parents, whose only child he was.

The laws against duelling are, in this country, extremely severe ; if detected in a 'breach of the peace' of this nature, both principals and seconds are condemned to the forfeiture of all their most valued privileges as citizens, and are deemed guilty of felony. Another consequence attending duelling is, that should one of the parties be killed in the encounter, the survivor is held liable for his debts.*

These laws are, of course, easily evaded ; were

* The following is a copy of the Act of Congress against duelling in America :—

SEC. 1. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, that if any person shall in the district of Columbia challenge another to fight a duel, or shall send or deliver any written or verbal message purporting or intending to be such challenge, or shall accept any such challenge or message, or

they properly enforced, there can be no doubt that duelling would be entirely put a stop to ; but, as I said before, the state of society generally is much improved. Not very long ago, if one *gentleman* declined (however civilly) to drink a glass of wine with another, his refusal (even if they were previously strangers to each other) was taken as an insult, and immediately revenged as such ; and even at this day there are many wild and reckless spirits, particularly men from the lawless State of

shall knowingly carry or deliver an acceptance of such challenge or message to fight a duel in or out of the said district, and such duel shall be fought in or out of said district ; and if either of the parties thereto shall be slain or mortally wounded in such duel, the surviving party to such duel, and every person carrying or delivering such challenge or message, or acceptance of such challenge or message as aforesaid, and all others aiding and abetting therein, shall be deemed guilty of felony, and upon conviction thereof, in the said district, shall be punished by imprisonment and confinement to hard labour in the Penitentiary for a term not exceeding ten years nor less than five years, in the discretion of the Court.

SEC. 2. And be it further enacted, that if any person shall give or send, or cause to be given or sent to any person in the district of Columbia any challenge to fight a duel or to engage in single combat with any deadly or dangerous instrument or weapon whatever, or shall be the bearer of any such challenge, every person so giving or sending or causing to be given or sent or accepting such challenge, or being the bearer thereof, and every person aiding and abetting in the giving, sending, or accepting such challenge shall be deemed guilty of a high crime and misdemeanour, and on conviction thereof in any court competent to try the same in the said district

Arkansas, and those locations nearest to the Indian tribes, who are ready primed for fight and excitement, and with whom it is dangerous to decline accepting this pledge of civility. Such characters as these, men essentially 'rowdy,' and 'loafers' by profession, are, in common with the gamblers of whom I before wrote you an account, found in great numbers on the smaller river steamers, particularly on those which are bound for the Red River. These men are looked upon with great

shall be punished by imprisonment and confinement to hard labour in the Penitentiary for a term not exceeding ten years nor less than five years, in the discretion of the Court.

SEC. 4. And be it further enacted, that if any person shall assault, strike, and beat or wound, or cause to be assaulted, stricken, beaten, or wounded, any person in the district of Columbia for declining or refusing to accept any challenge to fight a duel, or to engage in single combat with any deadly or dangerous instrument or weapon whatever, or shall post or publish, or cause to be posted or published, any writing charging any such person so declining or refusing to accept any such challenge to be a coward, or using any other opprobrious or injurious language therein tending to deride and disgrace such person, for so offending, on conviction thereof in any Court competent of trial thereof, in said district, shall be punished by confinement to hard labour in the Penitentiary for a term not exceeding seven years nor less than three years, at the discretion of the Court.

SEC. 5. And be it further enacted, that in addition to the oath now to be prescribed by law to be administered to the grand jury in the district of Columbia, they shall be sworn faithfully and impartially to inquire into, and true presentment make of, all offences against this Act.

suspicion, and are always avoided as much as possible by the respectable portion of the community who happen to be on board ; they are to be found (at least I am told so) always in the *fore* part of the vessel, and are loud and violent in their discourse, never without their cigars or quids in their mouths, and around them is an atmosphere of vice, dirt, and degradation. Another distinguishing mark of these men is, that when *not* engaged in swearing, boasting, and blaspheming, they are sure to be either *whitling* on their chair, or picking their teeth with a bowie knife.

I am thus particular in mentioning this unpleasant character, because he is one of a class in the far south of the Union, which, (though now rapidly disappearing before the march of civilization,) has earned for New Orleans its bad name, in so far as duels and assassinations are concerned. These men are always ready for mischief, and being utterly reckless of consequences, (inasmuch as they have certainly nothing to lose, and *may* reap some advantage in a change,) they are for agitation and bloodshed of some kind or other, no matter how unprincipled its cause or how disastrous its probable effect on the interests of the Republic. It is such men as these who not only help to bring the Locofoco members into Congress, but who are the strongest advocates for *repudiation*, and every other

measure tending to bring disrepute on the American government.

No one would, I think, venture to advocate the expediency of *Lynch justice*, when the arm of legitimate authority is strong enough to enforce its own laws; but when this is not the case, that summary process is not without its advantages. As a proof of this, I must instance, that a few years ago the more respectable citizens of Vicksburgh, (a place which had long been the nest and head quarters of the Mississippi host of gamblers, thieves, and murderers,) rose with one accord, and in a couple of days had literally exterminated all of those dangerous *gentry* that they had been able to discover. Since that time the *profession* has been on the decline, and every day their numbers are diminishing.

I have no doubt that you, in common with so many in England, entertain a vague idea that every other man one meets in the south is, more or less, a modification of the ruffian I have been attempting to describe. From this most unjust and unfounded belief it is only another step to include the whole of America in the same category, and to do so would be quite as absurd as to form an opinion of the whole of the English people, from the specimens of low miscreants which infest the parish of St. Giles', or Whitechapel.

Having, prior to this visit, passed so long a time

at New Orleans, its position and general aspect are quite familiar to me. I must not, however, forget that this is not the case with you, and shall therefore attempt to give you some description of the 'Crescent City.' This name has been given to New Orleans from the bend of the river on which the city is built, and which takes a semi-circular form. The Mississippi is here more than half a mile in width, and its impetuous stream is only prevented from overflowing the city by an embankment which is called the Levee, and on the solidity and endurance of this Le-vee, (as it is pronounced,) the safety of New Orleans depends. This embankment is raised several feet above the level of the river when at its highest floods, and the city is built on the gently *inclined plane* descending from the Levee to the swamps, which are about a mile and a half distant from the river ; thus the greater part of the town is frequently several feet below the level of the water.

The southern part of the city is the most ancient, and is now inhabited principally by the Creole families ; while the more modern portion of the city, 'higher up stream,' monopolizes almost entirely the business of the place. These two halves are divided by *Canal Street*, which is a broad thoroughfare, running at right angles to the river, and has an avenue of trees in the centre, and a carriage road on either side. The southern part of the city

may blame the Mississippi in a great measure for its loss of prosperity ; for the stream (by the bend in its course) being thrown off from the opposite bank, consequently rushes with full force against that part where the old Spanish city is situated. It is owing to this that, as the southern *quartier* loses *ground*, the northern gains it, and that we find an extensive quay, where, when we visited New Orleans three years ago, the Mississippi was rolling on with its turbid waters to the sea.

Such is the vast extent of commerce which is carried on in this great emporium of the west, that the tiers of the shipping—steamers, foreign merchantmen, flat boats, &c., extend along the quays for nearly three miles, and are quite as imposing in appearance as those of Liverpool itself. The space between the river and the warehouses is more than a hundred yards in width, and this literally covered with *goods* of various descriptions. Here you see *acres* of bales of cotton, casks of provisions, sugar, and molasses, by thousands, and *mountains* of bags of corn. All this is the product of this mighty land, watered for twenty thousand miles by the Mississippi and its tributaries. Well may this wondrous river be called the ‘Father of Waters,’ though by the way this name is not the proper interpretation of the Indian word, *Mississippi*, as its literal interpretation is *Great, Big, Strong*.

We are very fortunate in finding here many of those with whom we became acquainted during our former visit. I confess I greatly prefer, as a general rule of course, the society of southern Americans to that of the *Yankees*; there is something in the frankness of character, warmth of heart, and reckless hospitality of the former, which is very attractive as compared with the formality of manner and money-making natures of the inhabitants of the north.

For the first few days after our arrival we dined at the ladies' ordinary. The public apartments are remarkably good, and most comfortably furnished; and, moreover, nothing could be better than the dinner and the attendance. The hour (three o'clock) was the only thing to which we objected, and this (as it was my favourite riding hour) was so great an inconvenience, that we were, at length, induced, though with the fear of *rechauffé*d drumsticks and *allongée* soup before our eyes, to come to the decision of dining in future in our own apartments after the table-d'hôte hour. We have had no cause to regret the change in our arrangements, nor to lament any diminution in the excellence of our fare: the attendance, too, of the *Irish* servants is remarkably good and *prompt*.

We have found very good riding horses here, and have engaged the same animals for the whole period of our stay: by this arrangement we are

sure of having our horses *tolerably* fresh, and also of giving the poor beasts a day of rest on Sundays, a luxury which they would never otherwise enjoy if left on the seventh day of the week to the tender mercies of American pleasure-seekers. *I* have been fortunate enough to secure the services of a nice, active, well-bred, little chesnut mare; she is rather too much given to pacing, and a *little* shaken by overwork, but she carries me, nevertheless, remarkably well in the few rides we have found in the neighbourhood of the city. The roads here are as level as a bowling-green, but not always *quite* so hard, for (excepting on the *shell* roads) the grassy and sandy lanes and paths which we sometimes explore, are, after a very little rain has fallen, knee deep in thick black mud.

There are two *shell* roads, one on either side of the canal which leads from New Orleans to the lake of Pont Chartrain; they are between three and four miles in length, and, as their name implies, are made of small shells, enormous heaps of which are found on the shores of the lake. The roadside, which is *not* bordered by the canal, is skirted by a thick wood of tall cotton-wood trees; they all stand in water, more or less deep, according to the rains and floods, for the road is considerably raised above the level of the soil on which the trees grow: these trees are thickly covered with the long pendant Spanish moss, which, in its dark

gray hue, gives almost a funereal appearance to the leafless woods. This moss (the *Tillandsia Usneodes*) is reckoned very destructive to the trees, and I always regret to see it hanging in masses from the branches of the splendid live oaks, which are found scattered about the country. The only enlivenment to the monotony of a ride along the shell road is the passing of barges, and occasionally also of one of the covered passage-boats which are towed along the canal to Lake Pont Chartrain.

Happily for me I have my English saddle with me, for the art of making horse accoutrements of any kind is yet in its infancy in this country. I soon found, however, that if I expected to enjoy any peace, I must relinquish my riding-hat altogether; for no sooner was I mounted than half the *gamins* of the city were at my horse's heels, calling out to their friends, 'Viens donc voir! Voilà une dame avec un chapeau d'homme!' till I was fain to doff my beaver, and to take to a velvet cap, similar to those worn by the Creole ladies.

Among other places of amusement, we visited the race-course, which is a large and very tolerable ground, about two miles from the city. The weather was charming, and the wind being southerly, we could have fancied it June instead of December. On dashed the light equipages, made of nothing in the world but whalebone, and drawn by the swift *running* horses, and going like a 'flash of light-

ning ;' and on sped the horsemen, rushing by at full gallop, and hallooing, and whooping, and betting, till I grew perfectly *bewildered* with the confusion and the uproar. At last, we came to the ground, of our vicinity to which we had been warned by the usual request to buy a 'card of the running horses.' There was no entrance through the fence which encloses the course, without paying a dollar each ; so having given the money, we thought we should then 'get along,' but no such thing ; for twenty yards farther on we were again stopped by a repeated demand for dollars, without which payment we were respectfully told that we could see nothing. At last, we arrived opposite to *the stand*.

Such a mockery as it was of Epsom and Newmarket ! The sporting gentlemen of New Orleans, with long hunting-whips in their hands, were clothed in what they seemed, in the ignorance of their hearts, to consider a sort of racing costume ; green cutaway coats, with metal buttons, being evidently considered as the 'correct thing' to wear on these *sporting* occasions. The great and knowing men among them, the 'Peels' and 'Grevilles' of their turf, who were looked up to as oracles from having learnt what horse-racing *really was* at New York, had taken possession of the stand, and were laying down the law about a certain 'Lady Sarah' who was to win everything. The 'grand

stand' contained a slight sprinkling of the beauty and fashion of the other sex, but on the whole the entertainment bore, as it should do, a decidedly masculine character. We were invited into the stand to take some refreshment by a very polite gentleman, calling himself one of the stewards; for which civility, though it was refused, I felt duly grateful, till I ascertained that a *consideration* would have been required had the civility been accepted.

At length, the riders came out to be weighed. One was a very old boy indeed, in the shape of a negro, with white hair, and of proportions of a not very diminutive description. The other (there were only two) was also a black, but of very tender years indeed, and their dirty buckskins, and their yellow and red calico jackets contrasted finely with their dark features and their shining black paws. There was immense difficulty in hoisting them on their horses, two wretched raw-boned animals, whose only qualifications for racing seemed to lie in their long square-cut tails, and their fleshless bodies. The two jockeys were evidently (during the last lingering moments allowed them) coming to some private understanding, as to the best manner of conducting the race, the entire meaning of which confederation was known only to themselves. I, however, heard the elder and more knowing one of the two, whisper to the other, 'If you nebber

pass me, Phil, he'll give you five dollar, I expect.' It was but too clear, that the unprincipled old fellow was instilling his horse-racing morality into the innocent mind of the unsuspecting Tyro. I heard no more, for, at that moment, the bell rung, and off they started. And such a start! and such a gallop afterwards! There were two Irish cab-drivers standing near us, for whom the joke was evidently much too good to be passed over quietly. 'Hourra, Murty!' shouted one of them, standing on the wheel of his vehicle, and waving his dilapidated hat in the air—'hourra! and wouldn't you like to be seeing them black fellows at the Curragh?' 'And wouldn't I? that's all,' replied his friend: 'that dacent boy in yaller's well fixed anyhow.' The remark produced such a burst of genuine Hibernian merriment, and the sight of the two 'niggur fellars' straining and thumping along the course was in itself so irresistibly ludicrous, that we, too, were fain to join our mirth, and mingle our laughter with the rest.

Some time ago the diversion of steeple-chasing was much in vogue in America, but the accidental death of one of their best riders has rather cooled their ardour for this species of amusement. I must now close my long letter, and give you a further account of New Orleans life in my next.

LETTER XXIX.

THE ITALIAN OPERA — QUADROON BALLS — MARRIAGES WITH THE COLOURED PEOPLE — SALE OF QUADROON GIRLS — MR. CLAY — EPISCOPAL CHURCH AT NEW ORLEANS — ELOQUENCE OF THE PREACHER.

New Orleans—November.

THE Italian Opera is the favourite resort of the *élite* of New Orleans society. The house is a remarkably pretty one, and the company, which is the same we had once before heard at the Havannah, very respectable. The ‘Gazza Ladra’ is well performed, and two other operas are already announced as among the amusements of the approaching Carnival, which promises to be a very gay one. The prima donna has been too long a favourite of the public not to give herself airs, and, like many other ladies similarly situated, is very jealous of other female singers of any repute; and if they obtrude their claims to admiration, so as to even dream of usurping her dominion on the boards, she sometimes indulges the audience in fits of tears and passion worthy of the great Grisi herself. But the prettiest *sight* at the opera is

that of the Creole ladies; they never miss a performance, and sit, night after night, in the same place, carrying on their indolent flirtations in the most graceful, listless manner possible. They are the best dressers in the world, usually making their appearance in white, with one bright flower in the masses of their jet black hair, or perhaps a very few splendid diamonds. Their complexions are white as the driven snow, and their eyes, almond-shaped, dark, and sleepy. *I* never saw such eyes or such figures, in any other country; the Spanish women sink to nothing in comparison with them.

The Opera House is not much larger than our theatre in St. James's-street, so that every bright beauty is clearly visible, and the *fraicheur* of her toilette commented upon with as much zest as is bestowed by the Parisian ladies on that important subject. The French Creole ladies are remarkably indolent, and are apt to grow extremely corpulent, when early youth is past: they are very slightly educated, and beyond the subject of dress, I doubt their ideas extending with anything like distinctness. Love-making sometimes occupies them violently for a time, but it requires too much thought and exertion to be ever a very popular amusement with them—'Il parle si bien toilette,' seems to be the highest praise they can bestow on a male acquaintance.

The Quadroon Balls are very much resorted to

by *white* gentlemen, but neither *white* ladies, nor *black* men ever attend them : the reason for this is obvious, and need not be commented upon. I heard that the balls themselves were delightful, the young Quadroons generally doing the honours of their entertainments with great propriety and grace. It is well known that marriage between a white man and the descendant of a negro, in however remote a degree, is not legal in the Slave States : ingenious methods have been found of evading this law ; but as a successful employment of such devices, not only subjects the individual so acting to great contempt, but also deprives him of his rights as a citizen, they are very seldom resorted to. Before a marriage can be legally solemnized between a white and a coloured person, the former is required to make oath that he has *coloured* or negro blood in his veins. The difficulty to a white man taking this oath, lies not only in its absolute falsehood, but in the melancholy fact, that by acknowledging the existence of such a stain in his escutcheon, he voluntarily shuts himself out of the pale of communion with his countrymen for ever. Great, however, as is the natural repugnance to this step, it was once taken, and that not very long ago, by a young American, who was resident in New Orleans. A rich merchant and sugar planter, of, I believe, Jewish extraction, had an only child, a daughter, and moreover a

Quadroon of great beauty and accomplishments—to use the most received term. The young lady was the acknowledged heiress of her father's vast wealth, but he refused to bestow either his fortune or his pretty Quadroon on any but a white man, and that in lawful marriage. In spite of the mighty bribe held out, there was found but one man who was daring enough to demand the hand of the lady in marriage, and to be willing to take the oath which was necessary to make that marriage valid in law. With a view, in some sort, to satisfy his scruples of conscience, the suitor of the maiden, previous to his appearing before the authorities, pricked the finger of his fair fiancée, and *inserted* some of the blood which trickled from the wound into a gash which he had previously made in his own hand. After performing this delicate operation, he fearlessly, and with an open front, took a solemn oath, that within his own veins, negro blood was flowing, and was then allowed to claim his bride. But after such an avowal, America was no longer a country for him, so he lost no time in carrying off his rich and lovely bride to far-off (and, in this case, more *liberal*) Europe, for *there* wealth always obtains consideration, and shades of colour are not too closely investigated.

I, in common with other Europeans, who are not accustomed to consider nicely the different

degrees of coloured descent, was often surprised at the infallible accuracy with which the Americans detect the negro origin of these unhappy people. I believe it is chiefly in the *nails*, and in the skin of the upper part of the forehead, that the signs exist, for bright brown hair, a fair complexion, and thin and delicate lips, count for nothing with them as proofs of white descent.

There is a sad story current in New Orleans, of three young quadroon girls, the daughters of a merchant here. This man (who was rich in this world's goods) had followed the almost universal custom, and sent his children to Paris for education; there they grew in beauty and grace, were instructed in all imaginable accomplishments, and were bred up in delicacy and refinement; added to all which advantages, they had mixed with good society, and had enjoyed the amusements suitable to their age and condition. Their father, after their education was completed, sent for them home, with the *intention* of having their freedom properly secured to them according to law. The execution of this righteous resolve, he, however, postponed from day to day, fancying, no doubt, as we are all so apt to do, that he had plenty of time before him, and that his daughters would be *freed women* long before the *accident* of *his* death would otherwise leave them both bondslaves and fatherless. Alas! the improvident man calculated too largely, not only

on the strength of his constitution, but on the amount of his wealth, for he died suddenly, and, what was still more deplorable in its consequences to his unfortunate family, he died *insolvent*. As a necessary consequence of his dying a bankrupt, his property (including in its catalogue his hapless daughters) was seized upon by his creditors, in order to defray as far as possible their claims upon his estate. Then it was that those poor young girls—beautiful, delicate, and talented, as I have described them, were exposed in the slave auction at New Orleans, for *public sale*? I repeat stories as I have heard them, and by no means *vouch* for their truth; but as I have frequently heard the above anecdote told without its truth being ever called in question, I think it fair to conclude that it is *as true* a story as it is a melancholy one.

The system of visiting which is pursued here is very *foreign* in its character, *evening* calls being made both by gentlemen and ladies, with only the necessary *precaution* of first sending in their cards. We have a good many pleasant acquaintances, several of whom are kind enough to visit us in this manner; but amongst the agreeable friends who have come to New Orleans for the winter, Henry Clay stands foremost in his claims to our admiration and regard. As he is a ‘public character,’ I think I am justified in departing from the rule I have laid down, of not mentioning the names of

individuals, even when writing to you. But Henry Clay is too eminent as a statesman, and withal too remarkable a man in his private character, both for his high talents and his distinguished philanthropy, to be passed over in silence. There is about him a remarkable air of dignity and high breeding; his countenance is full of benevolence and intellect, and his conversational powers are of the highest order. It is for the sake of his health that Mr. Clay is spending the winter here, for to the regret of every one who knows him, and of *most* of those who do not, the constitution of this distinguished man has given symptoms of *breaking*. Of this, however, no one can see a symptom, either in his conversation or in his spirits, which in society are always good; and indeed Mr. Clay often indulges in a vein of humour ('the nonsense of clever men') which is, in my opinion, one of the most pleasant treats we ever enjoy.

The churches at New Orleans are both very numerous and remarkably well filled. There is a Presbyterian church, which is attended principally by the Scotch merchants and their families, and several Episcopalian places of worship. At one of the latter we, with great difficulty, obtained sittings, for, from the extreme popularity of the preacher, his church is filled to overflowing. Dr. H——, who officiates, is a man distinguished all over America for his abilities, which may truly be called

‘first rate :’ his voice is one of the most powerful, and, at the same time, the most impressive I ever heard, and he enjoys the glorious gift of eloquence in an uncommon degree. His preaching is decidedly what would be called in England, (in these unhappy days of religious dissension,) *high church* ; he does not ostensibly deliver his discourses extempore, but I imagine, nevertheless, that very little of the beautiful language which we hear from the eloquent tongue of this remarkable man, is written on the pages before him. There is so much (as it would appear) *unstudied* eloquence in every word he utters, and such bursts of apparently most impromptu metaphor and poetical allusion, that if they are read from a book, they are indeed the very perfection of art.

I have spoken of Dr. H—— more as a great master of the art of declamation, than as a minister of the gospel, preaching humility to the proud, and peace to the troubled in spirit, and this because the virtue of humility and the blessings of peace seem totally unknown and unappreciated here, and as much so perhaps in the pulpit as on the Exchange. Dr. H——’s sermons are admirably logical, and I never heard the great truths of Scripture better dwelt upon, or more convincingly illustrated ; his discourses, however, seem invariably addressed to the *heads*, instead of to the *hearts* of his audience ; and I confess that, after

listening to one of these *brilliant* sermons, I always left the church more impressed with admiration for the talents of the man, than with a conviction that I had received instruction from the book of truth.

With all this, Dr H—— is, from all I hear, an excellent man, and has the strongest wish to benefit his fellow-creatures ; he is said by some to be not devoid of clerical ambition, and indeed he bears the stamp of that passion on his face, which is full of deep thought, of a somewhat *Jesuitical* character. I understand that Dr. H—— was originally educated for the *bar*, in which profession there was every reason to think he would have become eminent ; however, after practising for a short time, he abandoned the legal profession, and (I believe) went to England to pursue his clerical studies at one of our universities.

The Liturgy of the Episcopalian church, in America, differs very slightly from that of the Established Church in England ; the *Lord's* prayer is twice omitted where it occurs in the English service ; and those portions also of the prayers of our church which apply to the royal family, and the institutions peculiar to our country are, of course, left out. The singing is very good, and the interior of the church, though totally devoid of ornament, is handsome and well-proportioned. There are no pews, the congregation being seated on

well arranged benches ; and I saw no *poor people*, or any, in short, that did not look as if they *meant* to pass for ladies and gentlemen.

After the prayers were concluded, on the Sunday before Christmas day, Dr. H—— stepped forward, and said aloud, ‘Any ladies wishing to ornament the church for Christmas, are requested to call here to-morrow, and make arrangements with me on the subject.’ The result of this invitation was, that the next time we entered the church, it was most exquisitely adorned and beautified. Over the plain white walls of the immense building, hung festoons of rare evergreens, *looped up* with camellias and other flowers, while appropriate texts of Scripture appeared on the walls, traced in delicate green with myrtle and pomegranate leaves. The effect of the whole was charming, and was the work of the tasteful ladies of New Orleans, who appear to enter with great zeal into any work which has for its object the beautifying of the church which they attend. There was a collection for the Missionary Society the Sunday after our arrival, and Dr. H——’s impressive exhortation brought down a perfect shower of dollars from the well-filled pockets of the congregation. The New Orleans ladies are most liberal to the poor, and to the suffering families of destitute emigrants,—doing their good in secret, and not letting their left hand know what their right hand doeth.

LETTER XXX.

INTERESTING PUBLIC SPEECH—STUMP ORATIONS—
 ‘PETER PARLEY’—PROSPECT OF WAR—ALARM
 OF THE SLAVE-OWNERS—DISINCLINATION OF
 THE UPPER CLASSES TO ENGAGE IN HOSTILITIES
 WITH ENGLAND.

New Orleans—November.

WE have had (I am happy to say) an opportunity since I wrote to you last, of hearing an eloquent harangue from one of the most distinguished public speakers in the United States. The occasion of the *speech* was the Anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers on Plymouth Rock,—a popular theme here, as I have before told you; and the speaker, being himself a New Englander, did the subject ample justice, from *feeling* it, which he evidently did, in his inmost heart. The scene of *action* (for of *that*, there was almost more than enough) was, strange to relate, in a church, not the one we habitually attend, but an episcopalian place of worship, of equally large dimensions. The weather was oppressively warm, and the edifice so crowded, that I hardly

think another human creature could have been crammed into any corner of it. For the first five minutes, I thought it would be impossible to remain in such a crowd and such an atmosphere ; but I had not listened long, before I became so spell-bound by the eloquence of the speaker, that I felt I could listen to him for hours.

He commenced with a description of the persecutions which had driven the Pilgrims from their native land, and then he descanted on the virtues of the said *fathers* at great length. Their conduct was contrasted with that of the gold-seeking, and blood-thirsty Spaniards—the merciless conquerors of the south ; and then the most interesting points in the history of New England were lightly touched, and commented upon. Of course, the maritime enterprise of his native state was not forgotten, and the exciting incidents of a whaling voyage were beautifully and skilfully treated, from the departure of the adventurous vessels, (those wandering sea-birds born in the wild woods, and fledged upon the wave,) to the capture of the great leviathan of the deep, and the return of the ships to the Port of Plymouth. The orator wound up, as a matter of course, his discourse by extolling the immense amount of liberty, prosperity, and happiness, enjoyed by every citizen of the Union under their ‘ great and glorious constitution ;’ but the melody of his voice, and the extreme beauty of

the metaphors he employed, kept the attention fixed, without the slightest effort, for more than two hours. The applause was frequent, and energetic; and not one of the crowded audience showed a symptom of fatigue or inattention.

While praising the virtues of the Pilgrim Fathers, there were a good many rather uncivil remarks made upon poor Charles the First; but on the whole, the mother country received a very proper share of compliment—a rare occurrence in America.

I had, on this occasion, another convincing proof of the gallantry and courtesy of a real American gentleman. The heat in the church was very great, and at one time I felt—to use an American term, which I quote often, as being very expressive—‘like fainting;’ so much so, as to attract the attention of a plainly-dressed, middle-aged man, who at once, and with considerable difficulty, opened a window near which I was sitting. Now, the window was a church window, and the small panes of glass, encased in a heavy framework of wood, extended upwards to the very ceiling of the lofty building. No sooner had my obliging and *disinterested* friend (for the Americans are not tenacious for themselves of the admission of fresh air) contrived to raise the sash, than he perceived that there were no means of keeping it fast in its new position. Nothing daunted by this discovery, this ‘Sir Walter’ of the

west, put his shoulder to the wheel, and having 'fixed' the heavy weight of the window-frame on that part of his person, he continued to support it for nearly two hours, with the most uncomplaining patience and good-nature.

Mr. P—— (the orator to whom we had been listening) is considered their most celebrated stump speaker ; and the only part of the civilized world, which I should be inclined to quote as that in which his spirited eloquence *might* fail in exciting a proper degree of admiration, is the *wild* portion of the Western States of the Union. The gentlemen from those districts require something more *alcoholic* harangues addressed to them ; something, in short, in the style of the following, which may be regarded as a good specimen of a western 'stump speech :'*—'Americans ! The great country—wide—vast—and in the south-west unlimited ! Our republic is yet destined to *re-annex* South America—to occupy the Russian possessions, and again to recover possession of those British provinces, which the power of the old thirteen colonies won from the French on the Plains of Abraham—all rightfully ours to *re-occupy* ! Faneuil Hall was its cradle ! but whar, whar, will be found timber enough for its coffin ! Scoop all the water

* This term is applied to orations in the far west on account of the situation generally offering no better rostrum than the stump of a felled tree.

out of the Atlantic ocean, and its bed would not afford a grave sufficient for its corpse—and, yet, America has scarcely grown out of the gristle of boyhood. Europe—which is Europe! She's nowhar—nothing—a circumstance—a cypher—a bare absolute ideal! We have faster steam-boats, swifter locomotives, larger creeks, bigger plantations, better mill privileges, broader lakes, higher mountains, deeper cataracts, louder thunder, forkeder lightning, braver men, hansummer *wee-men*, more money than England dar have!' Compared with such a speech as this, the moderate language and the refinement of Mr. P——'s discourse must seem tame indeed.

As this will be my last letter to you, before we embark for Texas, I must give you a short account of one more morning assembly, at which we have *assisted*, one quite as interesting as the last, though of a widely different character. 'Peter Parley' (the Peter Parley of the west) had arrived at New Orleans! And I was glad to have an opportunity of seeing this friend of every American and English child, and the author of some of the prettiest and most instructive works ever penned for juvenile understanding.* The real name of 'Peter

* I find the original 'Peter Parley' (Mr. Goderich) is not the author of half the books which bear his *nom-de-guerre*, he having a most successful English rival in the author of 'Peter Parley's Annual,' &c.

Parley' is Goderich, and he is by birth a New Englander, and has been, as we were informed, an *instructor*—in other words, he formerly earned his livelihood by keeping a school. We were kindly invited by one of our acquaintances to a *dejeuner* at which this gentleman was to be present; and not only he, but about two hundred young ladies and gentlemen, between the ages of three and ten, who were on this occasion to be presented to the 'children's friend.'

It was altogether a very pretty sight, for the rising generation, beautifully dressed, were waiting in mute expectation the arrival of the man whom they seemed to regard beforehand with a respect almost amounting to awe, and the pretty French Creoles were lounging about, and taking everything so quietly—what *they* expected, I know not; but, as for myself, having so often admired the simplicity and the more than parental kindness contained in the author's works, I confess I was not at all prepared for the impersonification of the ideal Peter Parley, who, on a joyful cry from all the children of 'Here he comes!' entered the room. Who could have expected to see in the children's friend a 'ci-devant jeune home,' who had evidently been endeavouring to look twenty years younger than he really was; and I really felt quite disappointed at the sad reality. Farewell to my visions of snow-white hair—mild and benevolent brow, and

gentle dignity! There stood Peter Parley before me, (author as he was of 'Tales about Travels,' and 'Shipwrecks,' and 'Good Children,') and I could hardly believe my eyes. The snug brown wig, and the stiff satin stock, as completely destroyed *my* illusions, as I am convinced they did those of the bewildered children by whom he was surrounded, and I felt at once assured that neither to them nor to myself could he ever be (even as an author) what he had been.

No time was lost (it never is in America) in making him a speech, to which the 'lion' of the moment listened with much complacency; for in the course of it there was read an imaginary letter from an English child, in which letter the said juvenile correspondent was made to hazard the opinion that 'no one in England ever *had* written such books, and that, moreover, no one (Peter Parley himself always excepted) *would ever* be found in the world capable of writing such books again. This was all highly satisfactory to Mr. Parley, but I confess that I should have been much more bored than amused had it not been for the agreeable companionship of Mr. Clay, whose entertaining remarks and quick perception of the ridiculous prevented anything like tedium being felt. When the address was over, and Peter Parley's best bow also, I was in some hopes that he would make a neat and appropriate speech to

the children in reply, one suited to their capacities, and calculated to reinstate him in their good opinion. But nothing of the kind was attempted ; for whether it was owing to the presence of the distinguished statesman above alluded to, or because the Americans *cannot* refrain from the amiable weakness of overpraising their country, he thought it necessary to harp on the old subject—viz., the wealth, power, riches, honour, and glory, of the United States ; talking over the heads of the poor children in such utter forgetfulness of their age and tastes, that (*having heard the subject discussed before*) we very soon took our departure with our party.

The whole population of the country seems just at present to be animated with a most warlike spirit. Hostilities with Mexico are proclaimed, troops are being organized, and drillings, and martial sounds, greet our eyes and ears at every turn. The *sanguine* nature of the Americans was never more apparent than in their views and anticipations of the approaching struggle. Poor Mexico is to be ‘catawampously chawed up,’ and the inspiring air of ‘Yankee Doodle’ is to resound through the ‘halls of the Montezumas.’ The war will cost them dear, but though fully aware of the fact, they *pretend* to be perfectly prepared for a contest with another and a far more powerful opponent. ‘Great Britain must relinquish her

claims, or by —— we must have war.' This is the burden of the song which is in every one's mouth, and yet it is at the same time very evident that the majority do not feel at all easy or comfortable about the state of affairs.

The owners of slaves and sugar plantations are, most of them, decidedly alarmed at the prospect of a war with England: they seem to consider it as quite certain, that in the event of hostilities being commenced, the English government would send black troops from the West Indies in order, through *their* instrumentality, to incite the slaves to revolt. We tell them that the danger exists solely in their own imaginations, and that England is too great to stoop to such base measures. They will not, however, believe that our government would omit so *good* an opportunity of carrying on the war with advantage to themselves in the very heart of the enemy's country. I can imagine nothing more frightful than a general revolt of the slave population in this country. They are (especially on the plantations) in such a vast majority in proportion to the numbers of the white men, that the effects of insubordination would be most disastrous. An indiscriminate massacre by the slaves is what most of the planters fear would be the result, in the event of black troops being about to land in Louisiana. But, in the midst of this panic, we can see that there are many among the

slave-owners who trust implicitly to the good faith and affection of their negroes, and who are persuaded that, in case of any personal danger to themselves, their vassals would be ready to defend them with their lives. This seems a very agreeable conviction, and, in all probability, those who entertain this opinion are justified in doing so, by the kindness they have shown towards those in whom they place such unlimited confidence. At the same time, when we consider the nature of the black population, and their aptitude to be excited by others, (who, flushed with success, and possessed of a strong desire for freedom, would naturally use every effort to gain them over to their side,) I think you will agree with me that the danger, even of those who *do* possess attached slaves, would be very imminent. Happily, there seems at present little likelihood of any troubles or horrors of the kind; and it is greatly to be hoped that it will be long before the rapacity and encroaching spirit of either party shall give rise to disagreements and hostilities, which (however they may end) must, while they continue, be productive of great evils to both parties.

When one considers the diversity of interests of the different States, and the jealousies which in consequence naturally exist between them, one cannot help remarking, without some degree of surprise, the unanimity which suddenly springs up

among them when threatened with a common danger. All their domestic grievances are at once forgotten, and all parties *appear* willing to support their national glory, even at the expense of a war with the whole remaining portion of the world. I have said *appear*, because it would be difficult to believe that they can feel thus in reality; for the South cannot be ignorant that even a short war with the mother country would altogether ruin her slave-owners and cotton-growers. A great proportion of the North and West are certainly advocates for war; for in that case the former would supply the whole of the Union with her manufactures, and the agricultural population of the latter are so inveterate in their antipathies to Europe, (the land they have abandoned,) that they would be willing even to sacrifice their private interests for the sake of gratifying their animosity.

I may, however, safely aver, that all the rational and thinking men, and nearly all the great merchants and ship-owners—those, in short, who have anything to lose—would consider a war with Great Britain as the greatest disaster that could befall them. War is a more expensive pastime in the United States than it is in any other country in the world. The equipment, pay, and transport of her militia, can none of them be effected economically, and no government is so liberal in its mode of conducting operations. Moreover, every one seems to

consider it perfectly fair to take every advantage of the executive, and many a man who might possibly feel some slight degree of reluctance in taking in his neighbour, has no hesitation whatever in 'doing Uncle Sam.'

We are now on the point of starting for Texas, so I shall close my letter.

LETTER XXXI.

MONSIEUR DE T——N—DEPARTURE FOR TEXAS—
 VOYAGE DOWN THE RIVER — ROUGH PASSAGE
 TO GALVESTON — ARRIVAL AND RECEPTION
 THERE — DISGUST OF THE FRENCH ‘ NOBLE-
 MEN — LAST PRESIDENT OF THE COUNTRY—
 THE EX-PRESIDENT HOUSTON—WRETCHED CON-
 DITION OF THE EMIGRANTS—TREMONT HOTEL—
 EPISCOPAL CHURCH—GERMAN EMIGRANT—SOME
 ACCOUNT OF THE STATES OF TEXAS.

Galveston—January.

AMONG the foreigners, German and French, counts and barons, who from time to time take up their temporary quarters at the St. Louis Hotel, I must not forget to make honourable mention of the old Marquis de T——n, a member of the Montmorenci family, and withal a Legitimist, and an advocate *outré mesure* for all that savours of the *ancien regime*. It may seem matter of wonder how the old man (for he is nearly fourscore years of age) could have chanced to find himself a sojourner in the United States; but Monsieur de T——n, unlike the generality of French Marquises, is a man of very large fortune, and having, as he said, met with

severe family misfortunes, he had rightly concluded that the greater the change produced by travelling in his habits and mode of life, the more likely it was to prove beneficial in chasing away the memory of his sorrows. He did not travel alone, being accompanied by his private secretary, and attended by several servants. All his ideas and habits (except that he took snuff in tremendous quantities) were aristocratic, and *as a marquess*, a real, living, and tangible *nobleman*, he was welcomed with open arms by the *kind-hearted* Americans. I sometimes fancied that the poor old gentleman was writing a book, so much perseverance did he display, not only in making notes in his common-place book, but in asking the most searching questions of every one he met. It is a favourite joke of the Americans—not a *very* judicious one, I think—to make the most extraordinary and extravagant replies to the queries of strangers; in the case of the old marquess, there was nothing too wonderful for *them* to say, or for *him*, in the simplicity of his heart, to believe; and whether from this, or from other causes, I certainly perceived that he grew more *bitter* against the ‘greatest country on earth’ every day he remained in it. Monsieur de T——n was our constant guest, for he sent in his card every evening with such an irresistible appeal to our compassion, in the shape of an inquiry as to whether he might not have

l'honneur de faire ses compliments à Madame, that we almost always admitted him.

As the time drew near for our Texan trip, I confess I looked forward with great pleasure to seeing again the country in which we had before made so interesting a sojourn; and, moreover, I was glad to find that we were to go in the 'Galveston,' quite a new steamer, and not one of those which, three years ago, I had not thought by any means in their prime. In this new steamer, therefore, we secured our berths, and no sooner had we done so, than our friend, 'the Marquess,' did the same; so away we steamed, one bright December evening, down the thickly flowing Mississippi—ourselves, Monsieur de T——u, Monsieur le Secrétaire, and suite, for the 'happy hunting grounds.' Our steamer was a very fine boat to look at, particularly *inside*; but she was long, narrow, and shallow, and much better suited to the navigation of rivers, than to encounter the fierce 'northers' of the Gulf of Mexico. She was fitted up with the choicest woods, birds'-eye maple and rose, and the decorations of the saloon were really beautiful; there was, however, (as we soon found) a great deal too *much above* water, and far too little below, for either safety or comfort. The steamer literally consisted of three *stories*, one more than the ordinary river boats; I preferred sleeping in the *attic*, and so, I think, did most of the passengers, but the weather

was so mild and warm, that as long as we continued in the river, almost every one remained in the open-air.

There is rather a fine building, and on a very large scale, about six miles from New Orleans, which, I was told, is the convent of *Sacré Cœur*, and some miles below it is the ground where the battle of New Orleans was fought ; I looked at the latter with painful interest, I assure you. We arrived at the South-west Pass late in the evening, and had to wait for several hours before we could get over the bar at the mouth of the river. I never beheld anything more dreary than that low, reedy, marshy shore, as (under the fitful light of a cold December moon) we gazed upon it from the hurricane deck : it looked *so* desolate, *so* blown upon, and *so* defenceless !

When once fairly over the bar, and in the open sea, we found that it was blowing pretty fresh, and also that the good ship 'Galveston' rode by no means easily in heavy weather. I never heard a vessel make such a noise as she did through that remarkably disagreeable night, for the wind, from having been southerly, turned suddenly into a 'norther,' and continued to freshen, so that before morning there was more than half a gale of wind. Every timber and bulk-head creaked, and complained in a most painful manner ; the motion, too, was most disagreeable, and the sense of insecurity very great,

owing as much to the above causes as to the drunkenness of the captain, who was in a state of intoxication the whole time we were on board. I soon missed our friends, the Frenchmen, at least their faces ceased to be present, but I suspected that some bundles of cloaks, heaped on the two sofas of the upper saloon, were the coverings of their suffering frames. At length, day dawned upon our miseries, and brought to light some ugly spectacles; and it was such a bright, joyous looking sunrise, that it made us all look still more cross and frightful than we should perhaps otherwise have done; but Galveston was nearly in sight, so all the passengers woke themselves up, as well as they could, and commenced their preparations for departure.

One or two rather rough-looking individuals were soon busily employed in sharpening their Bowie knives, an operation, as it appeared to me, of rather an ill-omened nature, and a few passengers, more peaceably disposed, were thinking of breakfast. But breakfast on board *any* steamer is an odious thing, and as we had seen enough of the corn bread, salt butter, 'Boston crackers,' and sticky molasses, we resolved to wait till we had crossed the bar, and to 'make it breakfast,' when we should arrive at the Tremont Hotel. As we approached the low sandy shore of Galveston Island, we perceived a great many merchant-

vessels lying outside the bar, the captains, or supercargoes preferring to unload their freight *there*, to running the hazard of crossing the formidable impediment at the mouth of the harbour. We were soon agreeably surprised by the visible improvement which had taken place in the appearance of the place since our former visit, and as we gently steamed over the bar at half-speed, we saw how much the *city* had increased in size, and what a busy air pervaded the harbour of Galveston.

As we touched the pier, I saw some familiar faces among the crowd standing on the quay, and amongst others was *Captain* Cary, the negro livery-stable-keeper, with his black woolly head, shaped like a sugar-loaf, and his countenance of singular rascality and cunning; he lost no time in asking for custom, and was very anxious to know, if 'Massa Cap'em didn't want some berry fine osses, or carriages fixed first-rate.' There, too, was our pilot of former days, and the polite pier-master, all unfeignedly glad to see us, and eager, after the fashion of the country, to shake hands with my companion, and bid us welcome to Galveston. *Captain* S——, the landlord of the *Tree-mont*, lost no time in conducting us to his hotel, which has greatly increased in size, and is now an immense building, and, having cheered us with many glad greetings, and *solicitations*, on our return to Texas, he installed us in our new apartments.

We—that is to say, the ‘Galveston’ passengers, and ourselves—met at breakfast in the table-d’hôte room, an apartment of gigantic proportions, and in which two hundred persons might easily have sat down to dinner. I never saw any one appear more thoroughly disgusted with his situation than the old Marquis on that occasion, except perhaps the hapless secretary, whose sensations of misery might almost be said to rival those of his companion. The former took his place near me, looked daggers at a great flat piece of beef, as large and nearly as hard as an ancient shield, and after contriving to swallow an *œuf à la coque*, confided to me that he felt convinced of the impossibility of longer endurance, and that he had taken his passage back to New Orleans in the ‘Galveston,’ which gallant ship was to return to that port the same evening. ‘Ma foi,’ said he, ‘c’est vraiment trop fort ce Galveston—comment diable ! il n’y a rien ici, pas même une cuisine française, rien que la mer, et des messieurs en *Poncio* Mexicain.’ In vain I strove to convince my aged friend, that it was a charming country, and that an excursion into the prairies would fill his mind with new sensations of delight and wonder, and that ‘La cuisine Française’ was not *quite* indispensable to existence. It would not do, the aggrieved and disappointed man took a walk round the town, inserted some very *fractious* notes in his common-place book,

made us some very low bows, and then took his leave of Galveston for ever.

We received a visit soon after our arrival from a very agreeable acquaintance, who had formerly been (during the time that Texas *was* an independent Republic) Chargé d’Affaires from that power to the Court of the Tuilleries. We received him with much pleasure, not only on account of his universally acknowledged talents, but as one who, from his peculiar position, was enabled to tell us something of the present state of Texan affairs. This country is now in a state of transition, it having been for some months virtually a State of the Union, though the formalities of annexation have not yet been consummated. The President, Mr. Anson Jones, has not yet been *dethroned*: he is a most excellent, straightforward, talented, and honourable man, and is at present in Galveston, awaiting with perfect composure the course of events, which are to lead to his dismissal into private life. He spent one most pleasant evening with us at the Tremont, as did also our diplomatic friend, and the English minister, whose unexpected arrival we had hailed with great delight. We could boast of but *two* rush-bottomed chairs in our little apartment, so the President of the country was obliged to content himself with a travelling trunk by way of seat, and I could not help thinking, that if there is ‘a divinity which doth

hedge a king,' it was hard there should be so little of it for a *President*: the late honourable Chargé d'Affaires chose the foot of the bed, as the most comfortable seat, and as for England's gallant Representative, he had, of course, the place of honour—namely, a chair with three legs, of a very insecure description. The conversation turned principally on the policy or impolicy of the measure (now nearly concluded) of swamping the Republic of Texas in that of the United States, and a good deal of doubt was expressed as to whether annexation would be likely, *permanently*, to benefit the interests of the former country. The fact is, however, undeniable, that since the idea has been seriously entertained, the increase of emigration to Texas has been very considerable, and also, that (for the moment at least) the affairs of this country are apparently in a very flourishing condition. How long, under the new order of things, this prosperity may last, remains to be proved; in the meantime, the pride of many of the original contenders for the independent freedom of the young Republic is deeply wounded, and they do not at all seem to be of opinion, that the privilege of living under the protection of 'Uncle Sam,' can possibly compensate for the mortification of bearing his yoke.

It must not be supposed, that the proceedings of the late President Houston escaped our notice;

on the contrary, we spent a good deal of time in discussing the merits of the conqueror of Santa Anna, and learned, in the course of conversation, that he is senator-elect for the *State* of Texas in the American senate. Many interesting anecdotes were told of him—anecdotes which would, I dare say, have impressed me with a greater degree of respect for the dignity of the man, as president of an independent republic, had not the ex-Parisian Chargé d’Affaires allowed us to penetrate a *little* too far behind the scenes. It was after dinner, otherwise the *Diplomatist* would not, in all probability, have been thrown so much off his guard; but after repeating to us some really remarkable expressions used, and opinions delivered, by General Houston, he destroyed the effect of all, by adding—‘*I shared his bed* with him you know, and as he was fond of talking, the president often told me, at night, a good many of his secrets, and kept me awake sometimes for hours, when I wanted to go to sleep.’

A great many changes have taken place since our last visit to Galveston; the number of German emigrants who *have* poured in, and are still coming in whole ship loads to the country is immense, and they are existing, poor creatures! in wretched, suffering crowds, crammed into temporary wooden houses, built on the damp prairie in the immediate neighbourhood of Galveston, and undergoing

all the miseries arising from sickness, and the want of wholesome, and sufficient food. The river steamers take them up the country, with as little delay as possible, but many die where they are landed, and thus escape the prolongation of the misery which would otherwise await them; it is melancholy to reflect that their inability to lay in the necessary supplies of provisions, and their certainty of finding no home prepared to shelter them from the inclemency of the weather, should make their death appear a positive blessing.

Who would not grieve over the sorrowful sight that we daily have to witness! The poor women, still retaining their national costume, bareheaded, and ill-clothed, are most of them surrounded by shivering children, and are almost destitute of the means of subsistence, while the men are always out shooting, endeavouring in this manner to procure some slight repast for their hungry families; but as *human* beings have increased in the little island, the wild animals have become proportionately scarce, and the daily search of the German emigrants for food, fully accounts to us for the diminution of game on the island. We were wofully disappointed on our first 'sporting excursion' to find how very little there was left to shoot. Everything has been destroyed, or scared away by the hungry Germans, and no living creature is now to be seen but a pelican or two on the shore,

watching the approach of its prey, and some little white sand-pipers tapping their beaks into the wet sand, and scudding along with redoubled activity at our approach. The bayons, or arms of the sea, which formerly stretched far into the interior of the island, are no longer in existence ; either the sands of the sea-shore have shifted, or some other cause has operated to effect this transformation, but certain it is, that whereas, three years ago, our rides were circumscribed by these natural boundaries, we can now canter for miles in every direction without being stopped by any such impediments.

Business has evidently greatly increased here, the stores are now numerous, and display articles of luxury before unknown in this wild spot ; and the 'restaurants' are neither few nor untempting in appearance. All this speaks well for Galveston, but still wise and far-seeing people shake their heads, and say it is too good to last, and that New Orleans will very soon swallow up all the trade of this now prosperous *city*.

We found that here, as at New Orleans, the *ordinary* was at so inconvenient an hour that we often gladly availed ourselves of the possibility of having our dinner in our own apartments. The public dinner at the Tremont is a curious scene to witness, for many of the men are dressed in what are called blanket coats of every colour under the sun—scarlet, pea-green, and sky-blue—while others

again make their appearance wrapped in the graceful folds of the many-coloured Mexican Poncio, which is flung with apparent carelessness over the shoulder. I have no doubt that mine host of the Tremont would gladly dispense with the presence of some of these gentlemen, as he has frequently considerable difficulty in persuading them to pay their score; but of all his bad customers, the one he most dreads is a '*hard-up Yankee*,' one of those *smart* penniless gentlemen, who make a merit of *shaving* any one who is weak enough to be taken in by them.

Our landlord told us of an individual of this description, who had one morning, long before the breakfast hour, poked his knife-like countenance into the large dining-room of the Tremont, and called a 'Boy.' He was a traveller, evidently from the Northern States, and was attired in a green blanket coat, and an unmistakably Yankee hat: 'I say,' he called out, 'what's to pay here for breakfast?' The waiter named the sum. 'And how much for dinner?'—'Half a dollar.'—'And supper, how much do you expect to get for that?' Having received the reply, and ascertained that the meal called *supper* was the cheapest to be had for money, the provident Yankee laid down his hat, seated himself at the table, and delivered his orders: 'Well, I expect *that's* what I want. I say, you 'coon-faced fellow, (to an Irishman who

stood awaiting his decision,) bring me some supper, and look alive !

If it is curious to see the somewhat fanciful costumes in the public room of the hotel, it is still more remarkable when they are collected together in the Episcopal church, where they show by their respectful and quiet demeanour that, notwithstanding the usual recklessness of manner of these *struggling* people, they *can* testify deep veneration when in the house of God. The service in that wooden church, which is built on a sand-bank, and in a place so recently peopled by anything like civilized beings, is beautifully and reverentially performed. The clergyman is an Irishman by birth, and is an eloquent preacher, and the church, one of considerable size, is well filled. The singing is really beautiful ; and here, as at New Orleans, the ladies have decorated the church with evergreen, formed into appropriate texts from Scripture.

After the service, we entered the Roman-catholic chapel, where mass was being performed, of which circumstance we were warned as we approached by the tinkling of the little bell in the interior of the building. It is a very small and unadorned chapel, but within it stood the white robed and tonsured priest before the altar, which, lowly as it appeared, was raised with humble trust to the honour of the Creator. There were two candles burning before

a small picture of the Crucifixion, and a good many of the poor Germans were meekly kneeling before the altar, and worshipping God after their own faith, in the strange (and as it must appear to them inhospitable) land to which they have fled from the increasing poverty of their own.

The responses of the exiles rose in hushed and tremulous sounds to the roof of the storm-rocked chapel, and near me knelt a fair German girl, with large tears falling silently down her cheeks, while just beyond her was a group which excited still more my sympathy and commiseration. A mother, careworn, sad, and weeping, was on her knees praying fervently, whilst around her were her children, who seemed almost as fully alive to the desolateness of their position as herself. It was, indeed, a painful sight to witness, they looked so poor, so friendless, and so forlorn.

Faint not, O weary mother ! faint not yet,
Bear well thy burthen till thy sun shall set ;
Arouse thy courage—struggle bravely on,
So shall thy earthly fight be well and nobly won !

Though from thy Fatherland the seas divide thee,
To the Immortal shores thy faith shall guide thee ;
The wearied ones shall there in joy unite,
And leave this darkened world for realms of endless light.

There, there is peace, for in our Father's house
Are many mansions ; then at once arouse
Thy heart, and lifting up thy trembling hands,
Await thy call to join the Heavenly Bands.

Hope and Believe—the holy words were spoken
To sinners sorrowing and spirit broken—
'Go, fail no more, thy errors are forgiven,
I go before to claim thy place in heaven.'

Then mother ! draw thy weeping children near,
Teach them to smile, and dry each falling tear,
For to the feeble lamb the desert winds are stilled,
And for the trusting ones the empty cruse is filled.

Go forth and prosper—may thy lot be cast
In pleasant places—and when years have past,
May children's children yet have cause to bless,
The faith their mother treasured in the wilderness.

M. C. H.

I was far too much overcome by the feelings, which the sight of those poor emigrants called up, to remain where I was, so I left the chapel ; but, alas, I could not escape the sight of human suffering, for *there*, exposed to the cold north wind, and the now-commencing sleety rain, stood the temporary sheds of the poor emigrants, the thin planks of which they were built affording but little shelter from the tempest, and the pools of standing water before their doors heralding the fever which, when warm weather should come, would be certain to break out among them !

These unfortunate emigrants have come out with the intention of settling in the German colony, called 'New Braunfels,' which is being established in the north-west part of Texas. The section of the country in which this colony is situated, cannot, I believe, be surpassed, in regard to climate,

by any country in the world ; but it is very much *out of the way*, the first settlers having placed themselves as far from a market as possible ; there is, as I am told, no means of conveying their produce, either by land or water, to any place where purchasers are likely to be found, and this is a very serious drawback to prosperity. If they manage to struggle through their difficulties for a year or two, they will, in all probability, *after that*, enjoy the *necessaries* of life in abundance ; but, in the wilderness in which they have pitched their tents, their labour will never make them rich.

There can be no doubt that at some future time Texas will become one of the wealthiest states of the union : it has upwards of three hundred miles of coast bordering on the Gulf of Mexico, and it extends in a north-westerly direction for nearly seven hundred miles till it is bounded by the lower ranges of the rocky mountains. From that elevated region down to the Gulf of Mexico, the surface of the country presents a gradually inclined plane, which is watered by several large rivers, running parallel to each other, and about sixty miles apart. The state of Texas covers an area of nearly five hundred thousand square miles, and there is every reason to believe that no other country in the world can surpass it in the productiveness of its soil, and in the salubrity of its climate. It contains three distinct sections of

country, each of which differs singularly from the others, in regard to climate, soil, and surface. They are called the *low*, the *rolling*, and the *hilly countries*.

The first of these is the country bordering on the Gulf of Mexico, and extending inland to a distance of from fifty to seventy miles: its surface is perfectly level, and its soil generally is a rich alluvial deposit of the most productive nature. The climate of this part of the country is decidedly unhealthy for Europeans, and its lands can be cultivated by *slave labour alone*. This level tract is succeeded by the rolling prairies, so called from the surface being gently undulating, like the waves of the sea; and this section extends from one hundred and fifty to three hundred miles—in short, as far as the Red River on the north, and on the north-west to the spurs of the rocky mountains, which constitute the *third*, or *hilly region*. It is the *middle* division, or rolling country, which (as I have before said) unites within itself the mighty advantages of richness of soil and healthiness of climate: moreover, the beauty of its scenery is very worthy of remark. The general appearance of the prairies is that of a fine English park, beautifully diversified with wood and pasture land, the latter being embellished by an endless variety of flowering plants. But you will be tired of hearing so much of the wild unsettled state of Texas. The

greater part of this interesting and beautiful country is still uninhabited, and it will, doubtless, be many years before the riches which are contained in what is now a wilderness and a desert, shall be brought to light by the hand of man, and properly and duly appreciated. We are now preparing for an excursion into the interior, so I shall send off my letter to New Orleans to be forwarded to you.

LETTER XXXII.

EXPEDITION TO NEW WASHINGTON—DOMESTIC LIFE
 UP THE COUNTRY—UNHEALTHY MODE OF LIFE
 —THE GERMAN GEOLOGIST—SUGAR COUNTRY—
 A DINNER ENGAGEMENT IN THE PRAIRIE—DIS-
 TRESSING SITUATION OF THE MAN OF SCIENCE.

New Washington—January.

AMONG the many kind invitations which we have received, was one from Colonel M——, the proprietor of a large estate up the country, called New Washington. Our friend has taken an active and distinguished part in the Texan struggle for independence, and is not a little mortified by the turn which affairs have taken, and by the merging of the ‘Lone Star’ in the stars and stripes of the Union. Colonel M—— was on his way up to his own place, which is situated at the head of the bay of Galveston, and about thirty-five miles from the island, so that our journey was to be performed by water; and we were also to have among our party both the ex-Charge d’Affaires, and the English Minister; the latter of whom was bound for Washington, and had hired a light car-

riage and a pair of horses to convey him across the dreary swamps of the 'Brazos Bottom.'

We were all on board at sunset, and happily the weather was fine, so that we were enabled to take up our station on the balcony, in the stern of the vessel. A river steamer in Texas is never a very pleasant thing to inhabit, nor were the charms of *ours* increased by her being forced to contain a good many more passengers than, when originally constructed, she was intended to carry.

Still, all we saw was amusing from its novelty, so, as the bright moon shone clearly out on the frosty night, we wrapped ourselves up in our cloaks, and defied discomfort of any kind either to depress our spirits or to affect our tempers. I must admit, however, that on such occasions as these there are *some* things rather trying to the best constituted minds, and among them I shall mention first the *loud breathing* (I use a mild term) of the sleeping passengers around us, and, secondly, the evils entailed upon unfortunate travellers by the use of *two*, and even of *one*, pronged forks. To the indigenous inhabitants of the country this last evil is a matter of perfect indifference, as *they* generally use a knife *par préférence*, but to *us*, who are less ingenious in the art of using the latter article, the inconvenience is very great. Salt spoons were also a luxury as yet unknown in Texas, they having hitherto travelled no further south than New Or-

leans, and even *there* they are not in very general demand.

It was two o'clock in the morning when we reached New Washington. The moon had sunk far behind the forest trees, and it was quite dark when we touched the landing, which is about a quarter of a mile from the house; but, notwithstanding the inky obscurity of the night, we were soon safely landed, and (to the number of six) made our way to the house of our entertainer. Our host is a widower, but his son, and his son's wife, live with him, of which I had been totally unaware till I was casually informed of it on approaching the house, and also of the fact that we were taking the *home* party completely by surprise. It was too late to retrace our steps, and not being as yet initiated into the warm-hearted character of settler hospitality, I could only regret very much what we were doing, and determine to mollify the anticipated displeasure of the lady of the house to the best of my power. It was far too dark, as we approached, to see anything of the exterior of the wooden houses, (for there were two of them,) but it was a great comfort to find in the large but scantilyfurnished room into which we were ushered, a blazing wood fire burning on the hearth—the best possible welcome, as we agreed, on such an intensely cold night as we had spent in the open air on the steamer's deck.

It was now between three and four in the morning, and the lady, whom I confess I dreaded to see, had long ago retired to rest, but she sent me word that she would get up immediately; and though I earnestly begged that she would remain where she was, the only words I could extract from the little sleepy black attendant were, 'Miss ull come in right away.' Five minutes afterwards, she glided into the room, wrapped in a white morning gown, and with her jet black hair carelessly tucked behind her ears, and words of the warmest welcome on her lips. She was a very pretty creature, under twenty I should say, but her countenance bore traces of early care, and the languor which was visible in every movement, betrayed ill health and suffering. It did not take long to make the discovery that our young hostess was possessed of one of the many kindly hearts which are encountered with such joy and gratitude in distant and half-civilized countries; she was a northern American, and one who, born and bred among the comforts and luxuries of more polished society, was but ill calculated, either from nature or education, to rub successfully through the trials and difficulties of a prairie life. She had married (as they all do in America) when a perfect child in years, and at seventeen was brought into the wilds of Texas to superintend a slave household, and to live upon *corn dodgers*. The consequences of this early

initiation into the trials and troubles of life were, as may be supposed, sad enough; but the instance of the fair young creature at New Washington, is only *one* among the many who lose their health and their spirits in the strange mode of life to which they are, without preparation and so very prematurely, condemned.

Mrs. Kosciusko M—— lost no time in conducting us to our sleeping apartment, which, if not luxuriously furnished, was very comfortable; and, having left us with a kind ‘Good night,’ a little ‘darky’ of about twelve years of age (‘Tempe’ by name) alone remained, waiting about, partly from motives of curiosity, and partly in obedience to an order from her mistress to attend to all our wants and wishes. Now, *Tempe* was very black and shining indeed, with a woolly head, small, and extremely round, like that of a large black pin, and she had withal a thin, lathy body, covered with a scanty garment of what is technically called, ‘negro clothing.’ Tempe’s principal employment was that of endeavouring to keep the little grandchild of our host out of mischief, and this, as the said grandchild, by name Kosciusko, had a decided leaning towards freedom, and was of ‘no account’ whatever, as far as quietness and obedience went, was no easy task. The *two* accordingly played from morning till night, and as there were plenty more dark coloured domestics, all equally indulged

with the little black slave, and all fully as indolent, it may well be believed that the order of the household was not very strictly kept.

We had the satisfaction of finding our beds excellent, and, indeed, this is almost invariably the case in America, as well in private houses as in the hotels, and even the steam-boats. It was late in the day before we awoke from our slumbers, and as from our window we could but just catch a glimpse of the bay, we soon hurried out to ascertain what we could of the *locale*. The situation which has been chosen for the *château* is a charming one, being within fifty yards of the summit of the bluffs, which rise perpendicularly from the waters of the bay, and which are here upwards of a hundred feet in height. New Washington is, as I said before, at the head of the bay, and these bluffs may be said to indicate the commencement of the St. Jacinto River, although, in front of the house, the water is at least a mile in width. The house itself is surrounded by fine trees, and some of the magnolias are really magnificent. After passing for about a quarter of a mile through a belt of wood, you come to the open prairie, which is very prettily diversified by clumps of trees, but the surface is as level as the ocean in a dead calm.

Our mode of life is as follows: We breakfast at nine on hot-corn bread, and pork dressed in various ways; there is, moreover, good milk and eggs, tea

and coffee. We dine at two, on roast pork, boiled ditto, and corn bread, and at seven o'clock in the evening we sup on the same. The food is spread before us in profusion, and, as I before said, our welcome has been the very warmest possible ; moreover, we have horses *caught* for us whenever we wish to ride, rifles provided for shooting, and fishing rods at our disposal if we should feel inclined to try our luck in catching any of the numerous fish with which the bay abounds. Our host keeps a regular 'hunter' in his establishment, not the *quadruped* so called in England, but a human *half-bred*, who is renowned for his skill in all field sports, and whose only ostensible business is to *lasso* the wild horses when they are required, and to kill game when it is wanted. Within a short distance of the house, and all over Colonel M——'s extensive estate, game of many kinds is found—deer, prairie birds, hares, &c., and yet with all these varieties of excellent food within their reach, (besides the produce of the poultry yard,) will it be believed that our hosts are content to live upon fat pork, and fat pork alone, every day of their lives ?

They are all ill, all out of spirits, and apparently weary of their existence, and this entirely from the unhealthy mode of life which is common, more or less, all over America. In vain do I endeavour to instil into their minds, that the indulging three

times a day in the *luxury* of fat, greasy pork and molasses, with the overpowering accompaniment of hot 'dough doings,' is enough to lay low the strongest man that ever breathed the breath of life. My arguments are of no avail, for the 'niggers' are greatly too much indulged, and the masters too indolent either to plant vegetables, shoot game, or catch fish, so the demon of dyspepsia having at New Washington taken seven other spirits more wicked than himself, dwells here unrestrained. The unhappy Kosciusko the elder sits on one side the chimney-corner, wrapped in his blanket-coat, for hours together, and groaning with the possession of the familiar but malignant spirit, whilst the still more suffering, but patient wife rocks herself on the opposite side throughout the livelong day, and, as she says, 'cries for company.'

Among the numerous guests assembled here—for it is to all intents and purposes an 'open house'—is a young German geologist. I forget his name, but he is a Prussian by birth, and is sent out by his government to report upon the mineral resources of the tract of land selected for the German colony. I have an idea that he is some relation of Baron Humboldt's, and it appears he enjoys a considerable reputation for scientific skill and attainments. We find him gentlemanlike and well-informed, and indefatigable in his endeavours to further the cause of the particular branch of study

to which he has devoted himself. He has not a tooth in his head; poor man, but that is not his fault, excepting, perhaps, that (inasmuch as I have remarked this peculiarity as a common one among German students) the inordinate use of tobacco may have some effect in depriving them of their organs of mastication. Dr. R—— is never without a cigar in his mouth (which feature is by no means of even moderate dimensions,) but he is far too good-natured to mind a laugh or a joke, and often makes them himself at the expense of his own personal appearance. The use of soap and water is apparently unknown to our scientific acquaintance, and any *change* of raiment is a possession which he appears to consider quite unnecessary. His researches amongst the mud of the Texan rivers, and his diggings after geological specimens in the deep alluvial soil of the country, cause great amusement to us all, and especially to the negroes, who take intense delight in watching his proceedings, and in recording the signal mistakes which he (in common with all men of *science*) is liable sometimes to make.

Our host, like all his countrymen, has an ardent, and inherent love for speculation, and he grew quite excited, when one morning the *savant*, taking *one* from a heap of small shells, which were lying before the door, announced to us that such a specimen would be worth half-a-dollar at Berlin.

I verily believe that the worthy colonel was already making a mental calculation of the expense and expediency of sending off a cargo of the precious conchological specimens to Prussia, when his hitherto blind confidence in the geologist was severely shaken by another assertion which he rashly, and most unfortunately, made. In front of the house are two large slabs of stone, and our geologist, in the fulness of his zeal for science, at once, and most unhesitatingly, pronounced that the said stones *must* have been imported from Bonn, on the Rhine, for that in *no* other part of the world was this exact description of rock to be found. Now, it must be observed, that except in the mountainous regions of Texas, some hundred miles from Galveston Bay, there is no such thing as *stone* of any kind ; and most unfortunately for the credit of the *savant*, (who did not appear at all to relish the refutation of his theory,) Colonel M—— had seen with his own eyes the stones in question quarried near the city of Mexico, and had himself transported them to Galveston.

But the doctor, poking in the mud, is nothing to the doctor on horseback ! And it is the best fun in the world to see him mounted on a little spirited half-broken mustang, with his stirrups far too short, and his breath coming thick and fast with excitement and fear. He never *quite* calls out for assistance ; but at the same time, I am con-

vinced that it is pride alone which prevents his doing so, and his face grows more and more cadaverous, as he splutters forth convulsive and guttural sounds, and prolonged ejaculations of 'Ach, a-c-h gott!' 'O o-h, o-o-h,' till, if I did not feel that even a geological philosopher has no excuse for being afraid, I could find it in my heart to pity his distress.

It is difficult to form an adequate idea of the extent of our host's improvidence, or, I might say, blindness, to his own interests. He has here an estate of several thousand acres of the finest land, and a sufficient number of negroes to cultivate a considerable quantity of it. He has made all sorts of experiments, and can tell exactly how many bushels of Indian corn or pounds of cotton every acre may be made to produce: he has also shown us a small plantation of sugar cane, which is now nearly seven feet in height, and which has ratooned* for five years successively, and contains an unusual quantity of saccharine matter. Yet, with all this, not an acre of land is cultivated, nor are even the common garden vegetables *raised* by the idle hangers-on of the place. There are large herds of cattle and droves of horses on the

* It is generally considered necessary to plant fresh canes after they have ratooned (sprung up) and been cut three years in succession.

estate ; but of the number of animals he possesses, I believe Colonel M—— to be in a state of entire ignorance.

Our stay at New Washington (which, by the way, is not a town nor even a village, but merely four or five wooden houses, belonging to the 'lord of the manor') has been diversified by a dinner party! The lady who kindly sent us an invitation is the wife of General S——, who is at present away with the army ; and she is the sister of our pretty friend, 'Mrs. Kosciusko.' The scene of festivity was about three miles from the place, and higher up the Bay—and we were all to go—even Tempe being dispatched to the scene of action in the fulfilment of her functions—namely, the superintending of 'Kossy,' the infant hope of the house. The waters being very much *out* in the prairie in consequence of the continued rains, it was agreed that we should all ride on such animals as we might prefer, so, the horses being caught, we set off in high spirits. I had an active Mexican pony allotted to me, while the doctor was mounted on a tall, rawboned beast, with a mouth as hard as its own bit, and a trot high and rough enough to shake even a better rider than the gentle German out of his saddle. He bore his trials, however, better than I had expected, and, happily for him, the prairie, besides being very much under water, was thickly covered with stunted trees, so that we

were obliged to proceed both slowly and cautiously, to avoid the risks of either being knocked off our horses, or of being plunged above their girths in the water through which we splashed.

At about four o'clock (the dinner hour) we arrived at our destination ; it is a log-house, like the one we had quitted, but it is constructed with great architectural taste, and covered (porch and all) with creeping-plants, which, in summer weather, must have a charming effect ; but in the winter one has certainly a prejudice in favour of glazed windows, carpets, and curtains, and the house is too decidedly a summer residence to be quite enjoyable in the month of January. But, though the house was cold, the welcome was not, and we were charmed with Mrs. S——, who is a most agreeable and intellectual person, full of energy and decision, and just the character to make even a prairie life an endurable, if not a happy one. She is handsome and highly accomplished, and conducts the education of her children with admirable skill ; and while with her, I could not help feeling that were such women *as numerous* in America, as they are *perfect*, the censure so often bestowed upon the manners and habits of American ladies might well be spared.

The *dinner party* in this unpeopled prairie, though totally (and partly perhaps because it was so totally) unlike any at which I had ever before

been present, was most enjoyable. The *tout-en-semble* was well calculated to make an impression upon European minds, drilled by the mighty force of fashion and habit into a subserviency to the conventional rules of society, and habituated to its monotony. You must not, however, suppose that there was any want of refinement either in the conversation or the dinner itself; on the contrary, the wines were so excellent, and the 'table talk' so varied and so intelligent, that we could hardly *realize* the fact that we were in a wooden house, with nothing better than a wilderness around its rough and unpretending walls.

It was twelve o'clock before the horses were ordered for our return, the rain was beginning to fall, and the moon (on which we had reckoned to light us home) was taken with one of her sudden fits of caprice, and had hidden her face behind the clouds. Our kind entertainers (the lady had a brother, nearly as intelligent as herself) were urgent in their entreaties that we would spend the night where we were; to this, however, we would by no means consent; so they followed us out into the prairie, and after many injunctions not to lose our way, and a strong hope expressed on all sides of meeting again at some future period, they wished us a cordial 'Good night,' and we proceeded on our way. We had not gone a quarter of a mile from the house, before our difficulties began in

earnest, for it was only by calling aloud to each other that we could keep together, so *pitchy* was the darkness of the night, and landmarks (even if we could have seen them) there were none. There is, at all times, a *despairing* sameness in the aspect of a prairie, but with us, the difficulties of 'plumbing the track' (for road there is none) were increased tenfold by darkness, and the watery state of the country. It was impossible to divest oneself of a bewildering fear that each step might plunge one into a bog, or into the far more appalling dangers of the Bay, which rolled *somewhere* at the depth of a hundred feet beneath us, though of its exact locality the obscurity rendered us entirely ignorant. And so we blundered along—at one moment finding ourselves *fixed* against a young tree, and at another perceiving, by the fitful gleams of the moon, that we were surrounded by the shining waters of the prairie flood. I thought that midnight march would never come to an end, so interminable were our turnings and doublings, and so little the progress that we made; and I was beginning, in consequence, to think rather gloomily of our prospects for the night, when I was aroused by a sound near me, which bore some faint resemblance to a human voice, in supplication and entreaty. It was the Doctor, in the act of *beseeking* his refractory steed to move on; so we listened; and presently, in guttural and most unmusical

phraseology, these plaintive words were heard—
'I karn nicht get on mit mine horse at arl—what
can I do mit him?—he is so idle, and when I want
him to go squick, he will here stay to eat.' At
that moment, the moon peeped out between two
driving clouds, and there was the poor foreigner,
and his obstinate *monture*, *fixed* as it seemed till
eetarnity. The animal's Roman nose was buried
in the long grass, and the unhappy doctor was
pulling hard, but hopelessly at the rein, with both
hands, in the vain expectation of persuading the
creature to desist from his ill-timed repast. This
touching appeal to the compassion of his compa-
nions was not made in vain, and by dint of their
united efforts the mule-like animal was once more
in motion; and we all eventually, but not till it
was three o'clock in the morning, and were wet
through (with the heavy night-dew) that we reached
our temporary home at New Washington. We shall
remain here three days longer and then return to
Galveston.

LETTER XXXIII.

A PRAIRIE VISIT — NEW SETTLERS — CHEERFUL
 NEGRO HOUSEHOLD—RIFLE SHOOTING—PRETTY
 SCENERY—THE DOCTOR DESERTS THE PARTY—
 RETURN TO NEW WASHINGTON — ADVENTURE
 IN THE PRAIRIE—RETURN TO GALVESTON—
 CROWDED STATE OF THE HOTEL—VOYAGE TO
 NEW ORLEANS.

New Orleans—February.

THE day following our memorable party in the prairie we agreed to cross the river, on a visit to a still wilder country, and also to the estate and country-house of Mr. A. S——, the ex-diplomatist, and also our fellow-guest. We were to cross the water, a long mile in width, in two remarkably rickety boats, nearly as unsafe in their build as canoes, and rendered particularly so at this precise period from the extent to which they were known to leak. The party consisted—besides our two selves—of Mr. A. S——h, the German doctor, and two negroes, experienced in river navigation, one of whom was to seat himself in each boat and paddle her across.

The instant that Mr. S——h and I, with *our*

black companion, stepped into the boat appropriated to our use, we perceived that it would require our united efforts to be employed in incessant *baling*, if we expected to reach the opposite shore alive. The other boat was, if possible, in a still worse condition, and the doctor (who promised to be a very inefficient auxiliary in case of danger,) was with difficulty persuaded to take his seat, and his *baling* machine, which machine was neither more nor less than a tin saucepan, devoted *pro tempore* to this useful and humane purpose.

It was a mysterious looking morning, for, though the heat of the sun was great, there was a thick river mist which threw a veil over *it* and every other object, and sometimes prevented us from seeing a yard a-head of our boat. From the difficulty which *we* found in keeping our boat even tolerably clear of water, we could judge of the exertions which were being made by our *consort* to effect the same end, and many was the anxious look I cast astern, but all to no purpose, the mist was too thick, and I could make out nothing of the whereabouts of the other boat. The water is in most places of great depth, but every here and there are shallows which extend for many yards, and which at low water it is necessary to avoid. We continued to bale incessantly, but still the water gradually gained upon us, and it was with no little joy that we at last found ourselves stranded (though

neither high nor dry) on a *shallow* within a few yards of the desired shore. It was more than three quarters of an hour before the other boat arrived, and in the meantime we had contrived, not without considerable difficulty, to struggle through the mud and water to *terra firma*. The troubles of the rest of the party had been manifold ; they had gone on shore several times, and the doctor had been thrown into such a state of alarm that he either could not or would not exert himself for the general good, and as to joining in the necessary duty of baling out the water, his hands shook greatly too much for any such exertion. The poor creature really looked like a spectre as he scrambled up the bank, and he vowed a vow that no earthly consideration should induce him to return the way he had come, though what was to become of him if abandoned on the side of the river we had reached, was a mystery to all parties.

We had no sooner landed than we perceived a small settler's house not far from where we stood, and to this it was agreed that we should betake ourselves, while our *white* companion and the negroes should walk to Mr. S——h's clearing, and return with mules for our use. We then introduced ourselves to the party in the dog house, which consisted of a mother and daughter, and three neglected looking children, who were playing about the floor. The age of the daughter did not *appear*

to exceed eighteen, but she must have been older, being, as I soon discovered, the mother of the three young settlers in the corner. The whole domestic establishment were fresh importations from one of the northern cities of the Union, where they had enjoyed balls, and theatres, and the pleasures of fine clothing, and here they were, apparently greatly to their own surprise, transported with their city habits, their summer clothing, and their thin shoes, (for I never yet have seen an American *female*, in any weather, in thick ones,) into the heart of the Texan prairies ! I never saw two people look more thoroughly miserable, or more hopelessly discontented ; and the way in which they described their landing at New Washington in the keen wind of a winter's night, and the misery they had endured from having to wait there in the open air till morning without either food or warm clothing, plainly showed how deeply they considered themselves aggrieved, and convinced me that the husbands of the two dissatisfied women had been obliged to undergo not a *few* reproaches from their companions in misfortune.

All these calamities were dwelt upon, as they sat shivering in the verandah, drawing round them their light summer shawls, and bitterly lamenting the hour when they first heard the name of *Texas*. We spent more than an hour with them—not willingly, I confess—for they were not good specimens

of Yankee character, and, moreover, we had exhausted all our topics of conversation, and began greatly to long for the reappearance of our companions. At this juncture I unfortunately caught sight of two men, whose heads were peeping over a new fence some distance off, and whose employment and dress were those of field labourers; their costume was so different from that of the *females*, that there was perhaps *some* excuse, though not much, for the awkward and blundering remark which I was drawn into making regarding them; for, stimulated by a complete dearth of any subject for conversation, and wearied to death of our situation, I, in an unguarded moment, complimented the elder lady on her good fortune in having been able to procure *white labour*, suggesting at the same time, how very superior the work done by white men is, to any which the negroes are in the habit of 'getting through.' The look she gave me was one which it was intended should convey volumes of independent pride and Yankee scorn of 'strangers.' 'Those *gentlemen* happen to be my sons and my brothers,' was the indignant reply of the republican matron, greatly to my distress and discomfiture, for, as you may imagine, I had no more intention of hurting her feelings or her self-love, than I had of walking back across the river to New Washington. I did my best to recover my lost ground, and to do away the impression which

she evidently entertained, that I had wantonly and designedly insulted her in the persons of the male branches of her family; but it was in vain that I remarked upon the praiseworthy conduct of those who by honest industry gain a comfortable livelihood for themselves and their families. I even went so far as to disparage the gentlemanly vagabondism which prevails in our country, and to extol the working habits of *hers* in contradistinction to it; but all would not do, and I felt that the 'English woman' was being mentally accused of the worst description of pride and *overbearingness*.

From under the cloud of ill-feeling which we felt was gathering around us, we were, as you may imagine, most happy to escape, and I cannot describe to you the feelings of satisfaction with which I at length mounted my mule and rode away, feeling, however, that the 'set-up *female*' from the old country was being subject to very severe remarks from the party in the shanty. Our party were all mounted on very lazy mules, and all being armed with rifles, we were (to all intents and purposes) going (as it is called in this country) 'a hunting.' We saw a good many deer, both singly and in herds, and several prairie birds; the scenery, too, was very varied and pretty. The heat of the sun in the middle of the day was intense, and we were glad to linger under the shade of the far-spreading *ilexes*, and spend the chief part of the

day in the woods. It was late in the afternoon when we reached Mr. S——h's habitation, a neat bachelor's establishment, far enough from either the pleasures or the *tracasseries* of social life. A good many small wooden tenements for 'my black servants,' as the slaves are generally called by their owners, were dotted about, and there were some young *stock* frolicking about, in the shape both of negro children and horses; there was poultry in great plenty and variety, and the farm and farm-building looked well kept and thriving. As for the house itself, there is no denying that it *was* small, neither am I at all prepared to say that it contained more than one room of very limited extent. I *heard* a dark hint given about another apartment, but if it *were* a real, and not an imaginary, chamber, I must be allowed to wonder why the ostensible room was made to do duty for 'bed-room and parlour, and *h*-all,' for such was, in fact, the state of the case.

No one was, apparently, more heartily amused at the entertaining deficiency of plates and places than our host himself. With too much good taste to oppress us with apologies for the absence of luxuries, which, in that wild scene, would have been quite misplaced, he allowed us to enjoy ourselves in our own way, and we were, in consequence, quite happy. The doctor was as hungry as a hound, and devoured boiled fowls and fried eggs enough for a dozen men, at least; and though the wood fire

did smoke, so that we were forced to sit with the door open, and though *one* took his plate upon the bed, and another was obliged to content himself with a wooden box, I never recollect passing a more agreeable day. Our host, enlivened by some excellent French brandy, shone particularly in anecdote and repartee, and when the shades of evening began to close around the prairie home, it was with real regret that we made our preparations for returning.

I never saw more happy, laughing faces than those of the negroes on that *location*. They were ready to give their opinion on all subjects without a shadow of fear, and in their joy at seeing their master's face again, exerted themselves to the utmost for the comfort of his guests. One of them—a stout, jet black young negro—was an admirable rifle shot, and carried away the palm from the gentlemen who, one and all, tried their skill while the dinner was in preparation.

We mounted our horses when the evening was far advanced, and in company with our hospitable entertainer prepared to ride once more towards the Bay; but nothing could move the doctor; he had been far too much frightened when it was broad daylight to be willing again to risk his precious person in those horrid boats. Seeing that his fears placed him beyond the reach of persuasion, the *ex-chargé* had nothing to do but

to express a courteous hope that he would make himself quite at home where he was, and then we wished him 'farewell.' The last glimpse I caught of the scientific German, was the dim outline of a man seated on the wooden bench before the door of the shanty, with his hammer and bag of specimens in his hand, and a considerable quantity of *Cognac* in his head. What became of him after that we never heard.

Our voyage home was performed in safety, though with much discomfort, and on our return we found that a *bear hunt* had been arranged for the following day; the weather, however, proved so unpropitious that, as the Houston steamer was expected down, we agreed to return to Galveston without any further delay. We could not part from our new friends without much regret, and there was so much genuine kindness and real simplicity in all their feelings and actions, that we felt as if we had known them for years instead of days, and regretted to think how little chance there seemed to be of our ever meeting again, either in the wild prairie or in the busy hum of crowded cities.

It is almost impossible to say too much in praise of the spirit of hospitality which is found in these new countries: every house on the wide-spreading and dreary prairie is open to the traveller, and no one is ever turned from the door of a dweller in the wilderness without a shelter and a meal. It is

true that far up the country there are said to be persons who have been suspected of playing most unfair and cruel tricks upon unwearied travellers; and one gigantic backwoodsman in particular, Shadowan by name, who inhabits a sort of lonely inn in the Washington direction, is suspected of having (in concert with his wife, a lady of equally formidable dimensions) brought not a few wandering settlers to an untimely end. His house is, in consequence of these reports, looked upon with a good deal of suspicion, and there are not many 'single gentlemen' found bold enough to take up their quarters in it, even for a single night. This bad character, however, may not be entirely deserved, for there is no doubt that great injustice is often done to these *wild men of the woods*.

There is certainly enough in their appearance to justify the worst conclusions; and one cannot fancy anything but strife and bloodshed as connected with all the pistols and bowie-knives with which they are generally covered. Still, notwithstanding their repellent looks, I have been assured that very many of these gentlemen of the border are meek and gentle as lambs, and only *get themselves up* in so fierce a guise because it is the prevailing fashion of their SET. Our friend, Mr. R., who has seen a great deal of frontier life, informs us that he has generally found that those who looked the greatest desperadoes were, in reality, the meekest

men in nature, and that he considered it very unfair to judge of a man in the backwoods by either his appearance or reputation.

In support of this opinion, he gave us an amusing account of an adventure which happened to himself at the abode of the very Shadowan whom I have mentioned above, and who must have been as ruffianly a looking fellow as could well be seen. Mr. R. was journeying along the pathless prairie in a *sulky*, a vehicle most appropriately named, as by no possible contrivance can it be made to carry more than one person, and that sufficiently uncomfortably to account for the traveller's becoming rapidly in a frame of mind suitable to the epithet bestowed on his conveyance. Our friend had passed a solitary day, no human form had he seen, and the only variety through the long and weary hours was, when passing among the clumps of trees that are occasionally seen in the prairie country, he caught a glimpse of an opossum on an overhanging branch, or of a graceful mocking-bird balancing itself aloft, and carolling forth its pleasant noonday song. And so he 'got along,' bound upon business, and leaving it quite a matter of uncertainty where he should spend the night. It was growing dusk, the air was cold, and our Yankee friend began to think it was time to look out a-head in search of a place where he could procure a night's lodging for him-

self and his exhausted steed. He was well aware that the vague and indistinct track which (in prairie language) he had been *plumbing*, led somewhere in the direction of the hostelry of the dreaded and far-famed Shadowan. There was no other house for many a mile, so the traveller being forced to put up with what he could find, steered straight for some smoke which he saw rising at a short distance, and which he rightly enough conjectured to be the spot he was in search of; but it was not without some trepidation that he thought how probable it was that he should have to lay his bones there, and that long before the morning light his sulky, and all that it contained, would become a prey to the rapacious Shadowan and his unfeminine lady.

At length, the inn (a small log-house) appeared in sight; Mr. R. urged on his horse, and soon found himself at the door of the inhospitable looking abode. A gaunt and very unprepossessing looking female having appeared to answer his summons, the new-comer requested to know if he could be accommodated with board and lodging for the night; the woman, who was no other than the redoubted Mrs. Shadowan herself, hesitated very much, but at last said, she really didn't think she could, for that Mr. Shadowan was out hunting, and that he wasn't over fond of having strangers loafing about when he wasn't at home himself—in

short, the good lady ended by distinctly saying that she strongly recommended the weary man to go about his business.

Now, the doing so, by no means suited the views of the Yankee. He was fatigued, and his horse was fairly *used up*, so he mustered up all his eloquence, and what with that, and no little expenditure of *soft sawder*, he fairly got the better of the lady's scruples, and gained a footing within the house. His hostess, after throwing another log or two on the fire, took down a rifle, and left the house, in order, as she said, to get him some supper; and a short time only had elapsed before a shot was heard, and Mrs. Shadowan appeared, bearing on her back a fine buck, which she had just killed,* and a part of which was immediately prepared for the hungry Yankee.

The hours passed on; it was a dark night, and yet no Shadowan had made his appearance. Mr. R—— soon began to feel *like sleeping*, he had devoured a good many *fixings* in the shape of venison, eggs, and corn-bread, and, fatigued with his gastronomic exertions, he requested his hostess to show him the place where he was to pass the

* The most successful mode of shooting deer in the prairies is practised at night, a torch being used to attract the animals, who will then fearlessly approach the light to gratify their curiosity. The sportsman generally fires as soon as he can see the creature's eyes.

night. He was, accordingly, conducted to a little inner room, or rather closet, where he found a low sort of pallet bed, on which he was informed that he was to stretch his weary limbs. The bed was not an inviting one in appearance ; in fact, no one but a tired Yankee would have ventured to trust his person on such a miserable and unseemly couch. The traveller, however, was not inclined (at that moment) to be fastidious ; so, having placed his bowie knife by his side, and a loaded pistol near his right hand, he soon sunk into a profound slumber. How long he had slept he knew not, when he was awakened by a stir in the adjoining apartment ; it was not much of a noise after all, but men who have gone to sleep with a consciousness of personal danger, slumber lightly, and the Yankee's ears were on the full cock in a moment.

His eyes were fixed on the door, but he feigned slumber to watch with greater security the movements of a man, whom he perceived through the half-opened door, and whom he sensibly enough concluded to be no less a person than Shadowan himself. He had not long to watch, for soon the door opened, widely though softly, and betrayed to his agitated glance the figure of a man of unusual height and breadth, who, with a large knife in his hand, was moving stealthily to the bed on which lay the Yankee traveller. His situation was an awful one, and, almost giving himself up for lost, he

gently cocked his pistol. The thought flashed across his mind that he might fire, and possibly kill his man, but then came the recollection that (his weapon being unloaded) he would have to encounter, almost unarmed, a no less redoubtable foe in the shape of Mrs. Shadowan. These thoughts passed rapidly through the mind of the agitated Yankee, as with his hand firmly grasping his pistol, he saw the giant Shadowan advancing on tip-toe to his bed-side. He neared the bed, the bare knife in his hand, whilst his victim lay nearly paralysed by fear and the variety of emotions which he was enduring. One more—a last step, was taken, and Shadowan was at the bed-side! Mr. R—— had his pistol ready, and his finger was even laid on the trigger, when Shadowan stretched over the bed, and raised the long blade of a knife above his head!

Now was the critical moment! The eyes of the desperate Yankee, who was on the very point of firing his weapon, were turned full upon his blood-thirsty host, when he fortunately perceived that above his head hung a side of bacon, and that it was with the intention of cutting a rasher for his own supper, and *not* with any murderous design that the hungry Shadowan had intruded on his slumbers. True to his human *natur*, the first sensations of the traveller were those of joy at his own safety, but his second were those of unfeigned

satisfaction that he had not been led by his ridiculous suspicions (however justified under the circumstances) to sacrifice the life of a fellow-creature. The remainder of the night was spent in quiet and in sleep, and on the following morning the only circumstance which could be supposed to have any reference to the adventure, was a remark of Shadowan's, that he was afraid his guest had been alarmed at something in the night, for that he fancied he had heard the *click* of a pistol. Whether this little *click* saved our friend's life can never be known, but certain it is, that Messrs. Shadowan and R—— shook hands and parted the best friends in the world. How many midnight murders have been committed by this worthy *gentleman*, remains a mystery, but there he still remains, to entrap unwary travellers, and afford the settlers a subject for many a harrowing tale of treachery and spoliation.

The steamers are in the habit of making such a momentary stay at the New Washington landing, that we were obliged to hold ourselves in readiness to go on board, by taking up our position by the water's side for a considerable time before the vessel was telegraphed as being in sight. Happily for us, the steamer was heard *snorting* towards us before we had had time to grow *very* weary of our somewhat cold and comfortless situation, and in a

very short space of time we were all on board, and steaming rapidly down towards Galveston.

When we returned to the Tremont, we were greeted with the melancholy intelligence that, from the great influx of guests, our comfortable little sitting room could no longer be called our own, so that for the short remainder of our stay we were obliged to content ourselves with the 'ladies' parlour,' by way of drawing-room. There was only one thing to make us much regret our change of quarters, and that was, that in the component parts of the society, the juvenile branches were in far too great a majority. An American child is not generally a favourable specimen of that period of life, and a Yankee boy of ten or twelve years of age, is one of the least pleasant creatures in existence. When scarcely past the age of infancy, one of these young republicans will, if he be not prevented, (and they are very tenacious of their rights as free citizens,) puff his cigar in your face, without the slightest regard to the decencies of life. The wealth of many of the locomotive Americans, who halt at Galveston on their way up the country, seems frequently to consist in the number of their offspring. Babies are a staple commodity, and their cries frequently rendered our nights sleepless and our days wearisome. There was one large family who had spent a noisy night close to us, and whose parents, to my dismay, forgot 'the baby,' on their de-

parture. I have no doubt it was a *girl*, and a sickly one to boot, or their memories would have served them better.

The ladies were all busily engaged during the day in needlework of some kind or other, but I was surprised to find that the now universal art of crochet work was unknown at Galveston. They fell in love with the accomplishment directly it was explained to them, and were all eager to begin a purse immediately. Unfortunately, the means did not keep pace with the intention, for Galveston could not boast of a single skein of the requisite silk, nor could the *blacksmith* whom they summoned to their assistance, contrive to make even the humblest imitation of a delicate crochet needle. I left them still struggling with their difficulties when I commenced our preparations for departure.

We did not return to New Orleans in the same steamer which brought us to Galveston, greatly preferring the 'Alabama,' a vessel lately taken off the Havannah station, where she had been running for some years. The influx of emigrants into Texas was at this time so great, that it had become quite a profitable speculation to charter vessels for their conveyance, and thus it was that the 'Alabama,' a good and safe boat, with an excellent captain, found herself running between New Orleans and Galveston, to the comfort and convenience of many who, like ourselves, neither considered the steamers

already on the station *quite* sea-worthy, nor the conduct of those on board altogether blameless.

We had made several pleasant acquaintances at Galveston, with whom we were sorry to part, and *I* had also to regret a delightful young *English* horse, nearly thorough bred, which had been hired for me during our stay, and which I could not of course take away with me. We left Galveston with the conviction that *then* at least she was 'going a-head' fast, and we felt happy in her prospects. The weather was calm and delightful, and we had a charming passage back to 'the city.' We approached the gay scene after an absence of a few weeks, with real satisfaction, for it certainly looked infinitely more cheerful than the lonely island we had left, and as I passed the convent of the *Sacré Cœur*, I could not help thinking how much less the fair nuns who inhabited that lightsome building were to be pitied than those who vegetate in a similar establishment at Galveston. Since our former visit to that place, the largest house in the island has been converted into a convent for the sisters of the *Sacré Cœur*, and I always thought it the most gloomy looking refuge for single ladies that I ever saw. We have now been returned two days, so I shall bid you farewell for the present.

LETTER XXXIV.

FEMALE QUAKER'S ORATION—TEMPLETON'S CONCERT
 —LOUIS PHILIPPE'S HOUSE—SLAVE QUARTER—
 DEPARTURE FOR A SUGAR PLANTATION—
 COUNTRY HOUSE ON THE MISSISSIPPI—DESCRIP-
 TION OF SUGAR-MAKING—THE CONDITION OF
 THE NEGROES—DEPLORABLE ABSENCE OF RELI-
 GIOUS INSTRUCTION—RETURN TO THE CITY—
 CARNIVAL AT NEW ORLEANS.

New Orleans—February.

WE found on our return to this place, that amuse-
 ment and gaiety of all kinds and descriptions
 were going on. There were nightly balls, plays,
 and concerts without end; but besides these po-
 pular recreations, there was the (to us) far newer
 exhibition of a Quaker-lady giving lectures on
 temperance in the St. Louis ball-room. She was
 a middle-aged woman, very prosy, and to the
 regret of at least one portion of her audience,
 endued with a strength of lungs almost preter-
 natural. Her lectures lasted for more than two
 hours, during which she exhorted her hearers to
 abstain, not only from fermented liquors, but from
 all exciting amusements. She never hesitated in

her discourse, which was entirely extemporaneous, nor did the well-plaited frills of her Quaker-cap vibrate with a single nervous emotion from the beginning to the end. Her lectures were evidently very popular at first, but after the novelty of seeing a woman address a large public assembly was once over, I confess that, for my own part, I soon grew tired of the monotony of her subjects and manner.

Templeton, the English singer, is also here, giving concerts, which are remarkably well attended: we went with a party of friends to hear him, and found the Assembly Room, though it is very large, disagreeably crowded. After performing some of his favourite songs, prefacing each with, what might be termed, a short *musical* lecture, there was an unanimous request preferred by the Americans for the 'Star-spangled Banner,' the fine and inspiring national anthem of the United States, which was beautifully sung, and produced great effect, being twice and most enthusiastically encored. The concluding words of the stanza,

'Tis the Star-Spangled Banner, oh! long may it wave,
O'er the land of the *Free*, and the home of the Brave,

made me think of the thousands of *slaves* outside, and *as* I thought, I rather shrank from the patriotic and enthusiastic demonstrations which were called forth.

After the excitement caused by the performance

of the popular air had subsided, a wish was expressed by some of the English and Scotch who were present, that the amusements of the evening should be terminated by the singing of 'God save the Queen.' After the satisfaction which they had shown, and the applause which they had lavished on the American air, her Majesty's subjects were certainly justified in thinking that the compliment should be returned, and that their countryman would be allowed to agree in their request; but, to my regret and surprise, (for I should have imagined that the Americans would have been both more liberal and more courteous,) they put a decided veto on the proposition. The discussion that ensued was beginning to grow rather stormy, when the 'Britishers' thought it more prudent to withdraw their motion, and to relinquish the anticipated pleasure of hearing their old national anthem performed in the United States.

I doubt whether, under ordinary circumstances, the Americans would have raised these objections, but the English government and country is just now decidedly unpopular, and the state of uncertainty in regard to the Oregon Question keeps the minds both of men and women in a state of ferment and irritation. I confess that there are moments in which I almost long for a declaration of war between the two countries, not from any vindictive or even *martial* feelings, but because I am tired of hearing

the majority of the people boast so much of what they would and could do, in case of a struggle for Oregon actually taking place. All their boastings, however, are in themselves so exceedingly ridiculous, that *they*, as well as the terms in which they are couched, are becoming a standing joke, even with their own people, and, as far as we are concerned, generally excite more laughter than displeasure.

It was not without feelings of great interest that we visited the house once occupied by Louis Philippe, in the early part of his eventful life. It is a detached house, by no means large, and is situated in that quarter of the city still inhabited by the remains of the French *noblesse*: it is surrounded by a verandah, and is pointed out with great respect to strangers, as the abode of the son of 'Egalité.'

In the same part of the town, and not far from this interesting spot, is the Slave Bazaar, as it may be called, for there the negroes, men and women, all dressed in their best, are generally to be seen, waiting for customers. On the appearance of any one likely to become a purchaser, they are marched out, and their merits enlarged upon by their respective owners. They looked cheerful enough, for Providence has happily endowed them with light hearts, as a counterbalance to the evils of their condition. But what condition has not its

evils? And who can say, that the All-Wise Dispenser of good and evil has not apportioned to each of us a more equal division of *both*, than at a cursory view would sometimes appear.

The cotton presses at New Orleans are very extensive buildings; we visited one, the front of which extended for nearly two hundred and fifty yards, and it is capable of storing 25,000 bales of cotton. The process of pressing is performed by steam and, with wonderful rapidity, each bale being compressed into half its original bulk. Our friends and acquaintances grow rapidly in number, and invitations come thick and fast. Numerous are those we have received to spend *any time* on the plantations of some of our kind friends after the New Orleans season, when they return to the country; and we should gladly accept some of them could our stay in the south be prolonged.

I believe that people in England have very little idea of the riches and hospitality of some of the southern planters: we are acquainted with some, who, I am told, have as many as two thousand vassals in the shape of negroes, and their enormous fortunes are spent, not only in dissipation and hospitality, but also in ameliorating the condition of those who are thus dependent upon them. We have heard so many different accounts in England of the treatment of the slaves on the plantations, that we have determined to judge for ourselves

how far *any* of them are true, and have, therefore, planned two expeditions—one up the river, and the other to that part of the Attakapas bordering on the Gulf of Mexico, where are to be found some of the sugar plantations originally established, and still possessed by Spaniards. The gentleman whose sugar plantations on the Mississippi we have engaged to visit, resides about *eighty* miles up the river, and possesses about two hundred and fifty slaves. After a prosperous *voyage*, we were received, on our landing from the steamer, with great kindness by Mr. and Mrs. M., who were awaiting our arrival. The house stands in a grove of orange trees, which had in their season been loaded with fruit, for we saw the golden balls lying in heaps upon the ground as we walked up the avenue leading from the river's bank to the dwelling-house.

We were very glad to find that we had arrived at the most opportune moment for witnessing the manufacture of the sugar, half the crop being already got in, and the whole process of grinding and boiling being in full activity. The former process is effected by steam, and the juice which is thus expressed runs into different circular boilers, generally about six or eight feet in diameter, and three in depth, underneath which are fires; as the sugar boils, the scum which rises to the surface is skimmed off. The contents are then emptied

into another boiler, where, after having undergone nearly a similar process, they are allowed to cool. The greatest nicety seems to be required in the boiling process, and in this appears to consist the great art of manufacturing sugar, the object being to effect the boiling in such a manner as to procure from the juice, when cool, the greatest degree of granulation. The juice which remains in the bottoms of the pans, after the sugar on the surface has been removed, is called molasses, and the sugar is valued according to its whiteness, and the peculiar manner in which it is crystalized.

I am told that a boiling process has lately been discovered by which the quality of the sugar is very much improved, as it has the effect of rendering it nearly white, and thus increasing its value by nearly one-half. This method is called boiling *in vacuo*, and consists in having the boilers made with a double case, so that the juice never comes in contact with that part of the iron which is immediately exposed to the flame. By this method the sugar escapes being burnt, and, consequently, has no longer the brown hue which, when boiled by the old process, it always more or less assumes.

We spent a considerable time in the sugar-house, which is a large brick building, with a tall chimney at one end. The negroes seemed to be as cheerful and merry a set of people as I ever saw, although for the last four or five days they had been very

severely worked. The labour required from them during the week or ten days when the crop is being cut and the sugar made, is most arduous ; night and day the fires are kept up, and the grinding and boiling is continued. There are generally two or three sets of boilers, in order that the process may be carried on without intermission ; this degree of expedition is absolutely necessary, because the juice, after rising in the cane to a certain point, very soon begins again to descend, and after this is the case, not only is the quantity of juice much less, but its saccharine properties also diminish. Our feet, while in the boiling house, were actually sticking to the floor, which was soaked with molasses and half made sugar, and the smell of the melting sugar, even at three hundred yards distance from it, is very oppressive. The niggers were very talkative, and seemed to look forward with intense delight to the harvest home festivities, which take place when the crop has been all gathered and the sugar making completed. This event is celebrated in every plantation by a perfect jubilee of rejoicing, and it frequently lasts three or four days, during which time the negroes dance and sing, and drink incessantly, never pausing in their merriment for an hour, but carrying it on from morning till night, and from night till morning. The black race are very fond of dancing, and also of all kinds of music ; they have, generally

speaking, sweet and musical voices, and I think that some of the most harmonious sounds I ever heard have proceeded from the lips of young negro girls. Idleness and love of liquor are the prevailing vices of the negroes ; could they be cured of these, much might be done with them, but this is extremely difficult, and, under the circumstances, perhaps impossible.

The field immediately behind the house contains the granary, storehouses, and workshops ; nor must the hospital for sick negroes be forgotten—its interior arrangements are excellent, and it is as clean and comfortable an infirmary as one could wish to see. The blacks themselves are domiciled in a little *hamlet* of wooden houses, situated about half a mile from the abode of the proprietor ; they appeared to be very comfortable, and such of the *gals* as we found at home were singing and laughing amongst themselves, while young children were playing about on the grass, as happy as their youth and their freedom from care could make them. There was something irresistibly comic in the movements and the grimaces of these little black urchins, as they tumbled about on the grass, and rolled their great *white* eyes from under their woolly brows. The owners seem often really fond of these odd little animals, independently of their selfish interest in them, as the representatives of so many dollars ; and it is very gratifying to find that the

children are never separated from their parents in infancy, *public feeling* as well as *law* being against so cruel and unnatural a proceeding. When black babies are sold *with* their parents, the former are valued according to their weight, and the sum generally demanded for them is, I believe, about five dollars a pound. I think I hear *you* exclaim, as I did when I heard this, ‘How very, very shocking!’ but having told you the worst, I wish you could also have had an opportunity of seeing, as I have seen, the way in which the little creatures are petted, and how perfectly happy they seem; you would then, I think, be inclined to join in my feelings of self-reproach at not being able to commiserate their fate as deeply as I had intended to do. A great many of the negro infants die very soon after birth, and this has been attributed to various causes; I believe, however, that it is to the want of common care on the part of the mothers, that these early deaths are to be attributed.

We have visited several of the plantations in the neighbourhood, for a general inspection of their establishments is always permitted, and often invited by the proprietors. Their method of making sugar, their system of cultivation, and their negro quarters, are all freely shewn to any respectable stranger who may request to see them. The result of this conduct is, that no plantation transactions are or can be hidden from the public, and that in

the large cities, one not unfrequently hears such questions as the following:—‘Were you at Mr. A——’s plantation?’—‘How were his negroes looking?’—and, ‘How were his *quarters*?’ If a good account of Mr. A——’s belongings and proceedings be given, then he is proportionately well thought of, and looked up to; but if Mr. A——’s negroes should be described as lean, sickly, and badly clothed, and their houses as in a dirty and dilapidated state, then the improvident Mr. A—— is considered at once as of ‘no ‘count,’ his credit is at least shaken, and the idea becomes prevalent throughout the city that he is in embarrassed circumstances, and must immediately sell his sugars, however low the price which (‘money being *tight*’) he may be able to obtain for them.

I am now satisfied that, on the Mississippi at least, the slaves are almost invariably treated with kindness, and that severity is very rarely practised towards them; when the contrary is the case, it is the *exception* to the general rule, and is almost invariably the fault of the overseers, and only occurs in the absence of the proprietors. It will surprise no one possessed of the slightest knowledge of *human nature*, to hear that the blacks themselves are by far the most cruel and exacting slave-masters. At a very short distance from Mr. M——’s, and on the other side of the river, is a large plantation owned by a black man, who was formerly

himself a slave, and who now treats one hundred of his kind with a tyranny and want of feeling which is proverbial in the neighbourhood.

On Saturdays and Sundays the negroes are allowed to work for themselves in their own gardens, or to lie all day long idly on the grass, if too indolent to exert themselves ; some have pursued the more industrious course, the consequence of which is that they have always poultry and eggs in abundance, and not unfrequently *pigs* to sell. Their produce is generally bought by their masters, who are certain to pay them twice as much as it is worth, and a great deal more than they would obtain from the passing steamers and flats, the owners of which sometimes become their customers. I have heard the most exorbitant demands made by these black gentlemen for the above articles, and on being reproached by their masters for their extortion, no apology more satisfactory than a broad grin was offered by the delinquent. The slaves often contrive to amass very considerable sums of money, and in such cases it frequently happens that they have (as an Irishman might say) twice as much as they are worth, their precious persons being valued only at five hundred dollars, while in their pockets is stowed away perhaps double that sum. Several planters were pointed out to me who had been largely indebted to their slaves for pecuniary loans ; but with all this, it

very rarely happens that the slave lays by money for the purchase of his freedom, though he might easily do so, were he sufficiently anxious for the boon.

You may, perhaps, think, that by saying so much in favour of these slave-owners, I am to a certain extent glossing over the evils of slavery, and conveying an erroneous idea of the condition of the black people. This, I must assure you, is far from my intention; I speak from actual observation of the good *general* treatment of the slaves, and in doing so you must bear in mind that my remarks apply more particularly to the State of Louisiana than to that of the slave States in general, about which I am not qualified as an eye-witness to speak. The impression upon my mind (and I have, I confess, a great horror of the state of slavery, *per se*) is that their bondage is not so irksome, or their situation half so unhappy as it is represented to be. The paucity of religious instruction, the want of a minister of the gospel, and the entire absence of religious observances, sacraments, and offices, are, in my opinion, the most crying evils in the slavery system. The children on the plantations are not christened; marriage is a mere civil contract; and when a negro dies, he is generally buried like a dog in a hole, in unconsecrated ground.

The slaves have naturally a strong wish for re-

ligious instruction, and they are also extremely inclined to the indulgence of superstitious feelings and fears ; they are also very apt to select a preacher from among themselves, who discourses to them on Sundays, and even on week days after their work is over, and who is always listened to with great attention. The negro preacher is not, however, much encouraged by the planters generally, which is I think to be regretted, as in the absence of any orthodox religious instruction, it seems hard that they should not be allowed to supply his place to the best of their ability. It is said, as an excuse for this rather despotic proceeding on the part of the slave-owners, that a bad use has too often been made of the privilege when granted, the object of the preacher being rather that of exciting his hearers to discontent than of preaching to them the word of God.

Cunning seems to be a quality possessed in a great degree by most of the negro race, and we were particularly struck by the artful manner in which we saw some of the slaves belonging to a neighbouring plantation prefer their requests to their master. They were sharp enough to see that the presence of strangers might induce their owner to agree to demands which it was very possible would, under other circumstances, be refused. So it was—‘ Massa promise build me new house’—‘ Massa promise, last fall, make my pigstie :’ in

short, the poor man was harassed by fresh demands at every turn, while we were *as* greatly amused by the artful plottings of these cunning people.

We had some delightful rides in the woods, watching the opossums and listening to the mocking-birds. The ilexes were of great size and beauty, and the hanging moss and the profusion of creeping plants added much to the beauty of the woods. After a very pleasant visit of a week's duration, we returned to the city in time to witness the procession of the fat ox on *Mardi Gras*, and to be violently pelted with *bonbons*, both real and counterfeit. The carnival gaieties so closely resemble those of Catholic countries in Europe, that I will refrain from giving you a description of them. There were the crowds of open carriages filled with masks, some in fancy dresses and some without, and the same (often most tiresome) licence of word and deed. I have no time to write you more of our adventures at present, so shall close my letter.

LETTER XXXV.

ATROCITIES COMMITTED IN THE DISTANT PLANTATIONS—DEPARTURE FOR THE MEXICAN ARCHIPELAGO—THE ‘ DIME ’ STEAMBOAT—DIFFICULTIES OF THE NAVIGATION—THE ISLAND OF BARATARIA — DON RUBIERA — LIFE IN THE ISLAND—THE MURDERED OVERSEER—SELINA—LEAVE BARATARIA FOR ANOTHER PLANTATION.

New Orleans—February.

OUR trip up the river had been so interesting, and we had seen the condition of slavery in so mild a form, that we could not help fancying that there *must* be a darker side of the picture than that we had seen. There can be no doubt of the fact, that in these days the *horrors* of slavery cannot exist, nor can acts of cruelty and gross injustice be practised on the black race on the banks of that great thoroughfare, the Mississippi River, or indeed any part of the country, where a man's actions must inevitably become known to his fellow-men; but, on the plantations which are more removed from public observation, all sorts of atrocities *may* still be perpetrated to the disgrace of humanity, without any risk of loss of character

to the tyrant who is capable of taking so cruel an advantage of the unprotected condition of his negroes. Such *may* certainly be the case, but we were informed by the best authorities here, and among them by some of the bitterest foes to slavery, that, in some of the distant plantations, the slaves lead frequently an easier life than they do on the Mississippi; we were also informed that though instances of cruelty are rare, the immorality which prevails is almost incredible.

We were sorry to find that we could not visit that part of the Attakapas which we were most anxious to see, owing to the absence from their plantations of those we had, at one time, intended to visit. The Attakapas is a sugar region, which commences some thirty or forty miles west of the Mississippi, and extends towards the Gulf of Mexico: it is watered by the Atchafalaya, the Teche, La Fourche, and other small streams; and it was here that Louis Philippe found a home for many months, during the troubles of the French Revolution. A gentleman, who is the owner of two or three of the model plantations in the State of Louisiana, kindly offered to be our Cicerone, in our trip to the lower part of the river, and also to show us some plantations on the Gulf shore, which are the most remote from human ken, and which are, in fact, almost inaccessible except by sea. He assured me, that these plantations, though they

are not more than seventy or eighty miles from New Orleans, have rarely, if ever, been visited by a European *female*, to quote a very disagreeable Americanism ; but we were not to be deterred from the undertaking by the objections, or evil prognostications of our friends, but commenced the preparations for our pilgrimage in a most business-like manner. Our kind friend, Mr. B——, not only kindly undertook to procure the means of conveyance, but also to make every arrangement for our comfort during the expedition. He possessed a sugar plantation on one of the islands of the Mexican Archipelago to which we were bound, and we could not sufficiently congratulate ourselves on our good fortune, in having the advantage of his escort and experience.

As the greater part of our journey was to be performed on the canals and lake, lying to the south-west of the Mississippi, Mr. B—— informed us, that he had chartered a boat for the expedition. The vessel in question was called the ‘*Dîme*,’ which word being the name of a very minute coin in circulation in America, will sufficiently attest that our boat was not remarkable for size. She was, in fact, neither more nor less than a small barge, of about the same dimensions as the smallest of those used on our English canals ; our canopy over head was formed of wooden planks ; and if ‘a strange invisible perfume hit the sense,’

it proceeded from the grease, hot iron, and vapour of a little steam-engine, which was contained in a small enclosed space in the after-part of our flat boat; the sides, excepting at the stern, were entirely open.

We were to spend the first night, if we were so fortunate as to reach the desired spot before night-fall, on the *island* of a sugar planter, whose domain lay directly in our way. As we had the prospect of a long day's voyage before us, we laid in a good store of provisions, so as to be prepared for any accidental delay. The first stage of our journey was performed by railroad, a distance of ten miles, which brought us to a part of the Mississippi where the 'Dime' was lying. A *lock* was opened for our admission, and when its ponderous gates closed upon our boat, we were soon let down to the level of the canal on which we were to proceed. It was a rainy morning, which was unfortunate, as the shelter afforded in the boat was extremely scanty; however, the weather cleared up about noon, and our spirits began to revive under the cheering influence of the sun's rays.

The scene became more novel and curious, the farther we progressed; imagine an infinite number of confused cross *water* roads, a species of natural canals, which grew more and more intricate in their turnings and windings as we slowly wended our way through them. Sometimes these aquatic paths

were wide and sometimes narrow, and on either side were flat, reedy, and most unwholesome-looking banks, raised but a few inches above the level of the water, while occasionally, but at rare intervals, the tall trees quite overshadowed our way. How the engineer and the steersman, who formed our crew, contrived to find their way through the puzzling sameness of this intricate navigation, was a mystery to the rest of the party on board: *they*, however, never seemed at a loss, but without any apparent land or water mark to direct them, they steadily pursued their course, the water sometimes widening into broad lakes, and at others becoming contracted into so narrow a channel, that our boat brushed the long flag-like rushes on either side in her passage through.

The sun came brightly out about twelve o'clock, and with it the *alligators*, for we soon discovered one of those hideous creatures reposing among the reeds a few yards a-head of our vessel. It was the first I had seen on land, and I was in hopes that he would permit us to make a closer investigation of him, but I was disappointed—the huge reptile must have been only feigning sleep, for he was floundering in the water before we were alongside of him. When evening came, we had emerged from the *narrows*, and were in what appeared to us, in the gathering gloom, a wide and extensive lake. For a moment, our crew appeared puzzled

how to proceed, but soon the distant barking of watch dogs was heard, and we steered in the direction of the welcome sounds. We had not very far to go, and, by the time we reached the shore, the noise of what appeared to us an entire pack of hounds drowned every other sound. The master of the house (which was close to the water's edge) soon appeared, and having reduced his vociferous animals to something like quietness and order, conducted us to his domicile.

I was agreeably surprised by the comforts of the interior, which (it being a bachelor's house) we were not prepared to find endowed with the luxuries of sofas and rocking chairs, or with the abundance of books, and even new publications, which, mixed up with fishing-rods, guns, and other symptoms of rural sports, lay scattered about. Supper was announced soon after our arrival, and I need not say, that we did ample justice to the venison-steaks, poached eggs and bacon, and broiled fowls, which were provided for us, while our host apologized for the toughness of the beef-steaks, by saying, that he had only *that morning shot the bull from which they were cut*. Large herds of wild cattle, as well as deer, abound in these distant solitudes, and the former, it is said, are not a little fierce and dangerous when molested. We were waited upon by a very pretty, and apparently well-behaved, *yaller gal*, Cecile by

name. She, like the greater part of the Louisiana coloured people, spoke the French language alone, and she was moreover nearly a *blonde* in complexion. Her vocation had formerly been one which is very common among the New Orleans negresses—namely, that of attending to the *coiffeur* of ball-going ladies, for the moderate charge of a dollar a week. Cecile complained greatly of the dulness of her present life, and also of some other grievances, the most important of which was the refusal by her present master to permit a negro preacher to exercise his vocation on the plantation.

We did not get under way the following morning so early as we ought to have done, considering the distance we had to go, and the uncertainty that must necessarily attend our movements, owing to the possibility of our losing our way, becoming short of fuel, and many other contingencies. We had been rash enough to volunteer the towing of a heavy barge, which was at first fastened astern; this, however, not being found to answer, it was *fixed* alongside, when, owing to the undue weight on one quarter, our luckless and labouring vessel was turned completely round, and so sudden was the movement, that before any one was aware of the catastrophe, we were *crashing* through the overhanging boughs of a live oak, which was most

inopportunately in our way, and only escaped personal injury by throwing ourselves flat on the deck. The consequence of these and other mishaps was, that throughout the day there was a sensible diminution of speed, and that, towards evening, the engineer informed us, not only that our wood was nearly exhausted, but that something had gone wrong with the frail and nearly worn-out machinery of the engine, so that we must remain where we were for the night.

The place where we were now *fixed*, was not one which (had we been free agents) we should have chosen for our night quarters: it was a broad expanse of water, but still not so extensive as to prevent our seeing the reedy shores on either side, and as a thick steamy fog was rising round us, we agreed that we had never seen a location better adapted for the nursery of fever and ague than the one in which chance, or, as we suspected, the *intentions* of the engineer and his companion had placed us. The idea (to unclimatized Europeans) of spending the night in so unwholesome a place, was not an agreeable one, but we had nothing to do but to make the best of it; so a bed was made for me *alongside* of the engine on a heap of cloaks, while the rest of the party chose the softest planks they could find, and laid themselves down on the damp deck.

Before six o'clock the next morning the bustle of departure began, and with the first rays of morning light we were astir. From under the shelter of my engine room I had the amusement of hearing a most obliging offer made by the Yankee engineer to my companion outside. They were both washing their faces from wooden buckets, and wiping them with marvellously small pieces of cotton cloth; which attempt at ablution having been completed, the courteous engineer made a most obliging offer of his tooth-brush, (which, be it known, had evidently seen some service;) he *worded* the offer thus, 'I guess now, you'd like the loan of that ere article—it isn't every one I'd like to lend it to, and that's a fact; but I expect you Britishers are kinder particular about *clean* things.'

We enjoyed some hot coffee exceedingly after our *camping* out, and no sooner was our morning meal concluded, than the engineer set to work to repair damages, and we were soon 'ready for sea,' and again on our voyage. Towards the middle of the day the channels became gradually wider, till at length we came to the open sea, 'without a mark, without a bound!' And how fresh and clear and healthy it seemed, when contrasted with the muddy canals, and rushy weedy streams we had been passing through. A long low island, by name Barataria, was the place to which we were

bound ; it was inhabited by an old Spaniard, Don Ribiera, by name, who would be happy, we were told, to give us shelter for the night. No sooner was our craft in sight, than the Don, on hospitable thoughts intent, sent off a boat to bring us to his house, which was about a mile from the place where we were.

The greater part of the island of Barataria is planted with sugar cane, which is said to produce a very fine crop, and there is no doubt that the property might be made still more valuable than it is, by expending a comparatively small sum of money in redeeming a portion of the land from the occasional encroachments of the sea, owing to which it is at present rendered useless for any purposes of cultivation. The whole of the island is extremely low, so much so as to be scarcely visible till you arrive very near it, but when once landed there is a good deal to admire, particularly in the thick groves of orange trees which grow in every direction.

Don Ribiera is an aged Spaniard, who, in consequence of his straitened means, found himself compelled to sell a portion of his paternal property in order to pay some of his numerous creditors. The *Don* has a great many slaves, among whom (the *Donna* preferring the gayer society of the city) he lives in a state of patriarchal

simplicity. No sooner had we landed, than the old Spaniard waddled down to receive us, and to offer us the use of his house, as long as we chose to remain on the island. Our next greeting proceeded from a tribe of negro women and girls, of all shades of colour, from jet black to clear brunette; they spoke little of any language besides a very indifferent mongrel Spanish, and it was evident that they enjoyed a considerable degree of liberty and licence. I never heard such garrulity in my life as on that occasion; they all talked at once, and each had a grievance to complain of, and a wrong to be redressed; the overseer being the especial object of their hatred, and the originator (by their account) of all their grievances.

We were conducted through a grove of orange-trees to a small house, about three hundred yards from that occupied by Don Ribiera and his dark family, and from which, through the trees, we could catch glimpses of the blue waters of the then tranquil gulf. The Don endeavoured to make us as comfortable as circumstances would permit, and gave us a profusion of eggs and oysters—the only food, excepting occasionally some tolerable fish, in which he constantly indulged. At night, when I adjourned to our lonely little dwelling, which (after the departure of half a dozen chattering and most

persevering black attendants) we had all to ourselves, I greatly enjoyed the breath of the cool sea-breeze as it blew over the delicious blossoms of the orange-trees ; the latter were loaded with fruit and blossom, and the night air was quite heavy with perfume.

By the accounts of the women, it appeared that the overseer was a hard task-master, and that punishment was frequent on the island ; with all this they did not look unhappy, for they had food in abundance, a good hospital to be nursed in when sick, and a skilful white doctor to attend them. Still, on the whole, I am inclined to think that the government of Barataria is not too well conducted, and that many abuses on the island call loudly for reform. As a proof of this, I shall tell you a story which relates to a most tragical event of very recent occurrence on the plantation.

One of the young negroes possessed a wife, Selina by name, to whom he was much attached ; it appeared, however, that his affection was neither appreciated nor returned by its ungrateful object, for she amused herself with carrying on an open flirtation with the overseer—the predecessor of the man we found on the island. Now, far from considering such attentions as a disgrace, the coloured women are almost invariably too proud of the attentions of white men, in any grade of society, to

be very scrupulous about receiving them, so poor Josef being aware of his wife's weakness, and that *there* 'where he had garnered up his heart,' he was most ruthlessly deceived, became a prey to jealousy, and eager for revenge. Selina's claims to beauty consisted in a jet black skin, a laughing face, plenty of white teeth, and a tolerable figure ; she was, in short, the black belle of the island, and gave herself all the ordinary and accustomed airs of a reigning beauty. On the proceedings of this fickle dark one did the injured husband keep a watchful eye, and in order the better to arrive at the truth, he one day ensconced himself in an obscure corner of the overseer's own house, whence he could (without being seen himself) follow the movements and hear the conversation of the *friends*, as they walked backwards and forwards under the wooden verandah of the building. Poor Josef, 'Haply, for *he was black*,' and had not 'soft parts of conversation ;' he did not *quite* re-echo the words of the poet—

I had rather be a toad,
And live upon the vapour of a dungeon,
Than keep a corner of the thing I love
For others——

but for all that his jealousy was neither less violent, nor his vengeance less signal, than that of the misguided Moor. In a fit of the wildest exasperation, he flew to his hut, and commenced sharpening his

axe, in preparation for the deed of retribution which he meditated.

But I will not dwell upon the painful details—that very night Josef murdered the overseer, and after having, with another blow, inflicted a ghastly wound on his faithless wife, he fled for safety to the woods. The momentary shelter afforded by the small groves of trees which grow on the island was soon found by the unhappy fugitive to be insufficient for the purpose of securing him from discovery. The numerous scouts who were sent in search of him lined the wood in every direction, and finding himself hotly pursued, the unhappy wretch at length made for the sugar-house, and took refuge behind the boiler. A powerful and well armed man *at bay*, strengthened with the courage which despair can give, was what no man on the island had courage to face. Notwithstanding the repeated orders that were given, no one could be found willing to come to close quarters with the man, who evidently intended to sell his life as dearly as he could ; so, at length, despairing of taking him by any other means, they shot him where he stood.

It was a sad story, for Josef had been a general favourite, and the provocations he had endured went far to justify the act he had committed. Neither *his* death, nor that of the overseer, made

any impression on his wife ; she recovered from her wounds, and became, as was evident to us, (from the ill-concealed jealousy of the others,) the favourite slave of old Don Ribiera. The negroes being (as is well known) a most superstitious race, the horror they evinced of the spot where their companion was killed was very great. No one among them would venture alone, and after dark, into the sugar-house, unless absolutely compelled to do so ; and this fact having come to the ears of the overseer, it became a favourite punishment with him, (and a most cruel one it was,) to cause such slaves as had been guilty of trifling offences, to pass the night alone in the dreaded spot, where they imagined the ghost of their deceased comrade to be continually lurking.

We remained three days on the famed island of Barataria, riding on horseback daily, and making our observations on the state and condition of the negroes, which observations were not, on the whole, very favourable either to the owner or his system ; in short, from all I have been able to gather during our sojourn in slave countries, I have arrived at the conviction that the Spaniards are harder task-masters, and less fitted in every way for the great responsibility of slave property, than either the French or the Americans. I had the same impression when I visited Cuba, and in the Gulf of

Mexico I have seen no reason to change my opinion.

We took our departure in a very pretty and fast sailing schooner of about twenty tons—the property of the ‘Lord of the *Isle*,’ who accompanied us part of the way on our return. The chattering women accompanied me to the water’s edge, kissing my hand, and a few of them even contriving to shed some *unnatural* tears on our departure. We had of course left a few dollars with them, in return for their obsequious attendance, but I confess that I was not prepared to find that (not content with their legitimate gains) they had emptied my purse! ‘’Twas something,’ and on taking it out soon after our embarkation, I found to my dismay that ‘’twas nothing!’ Though my dollars had ‘enriched’ the ‘Selinas’ and ‘Angelinas’ of the Barataria plantation, they had ‘left me poor indeed,’ and poorer perhaps in my good opinion of the black race than in anything else, for the idea I had formerly entertained of their skill in cunning and trickery was by no means lessened by this last occurrence.

We had nothing in our schooner, by way of cargo, but Indian corn; this was thrown loosely into the vessel, which was not decked, and as the husks were still on the corn, the *produce* formed an agreeable seat. On it we reclined in luxurious

indolence, the old Spaniard smoking his pipe in dignified silence, and a favourable breeze wafting us gently over the smooth and sunlit sea ; we all agreed that it was real and positive enjoyment, and were very far from wishing our sail to be terminated, when we came in sight of some more low land, on which was the sugar plantation belonging to our friend, Mr. B——.

LETTER XXXVI.

MORE ABOUT THE BLACKS—VOYAGE AMONG THE ISLANDS—IMMENSE SLAUGHTER OF ALLIGATORS—A MID-DAY MEAL IN THE WOODS—EXQUISITE SCENERY—MOSQUITOES—GAILY DRESSED INDIANS—EXTREME HOSPITALITY OF THE SOUTHERN PLANTERS—BATTLE-FIELD OF NEW ORLEANS—RETURN TO THE CITY.

New Orleans, March.

I MUST now send you the sequel of our adventures in the Mexican Archipelago, and show you how we returned to this place after our cruize. Mr. B——'s overseer, on the island, resided in a small house not far from the beach, and was blessed with a black wife, and a large family of dingy children.

Soon after our arrival, I, with considerable difficulty, mounted the most enormous horse it was ever my fate to see, (the creature measured eighteen hands,) and rode to inspect a fort of great strength, which the American Government are constructing at an immense cost, and no inconsiderable difficulty, on this desolate spot, but except this erection, which (though not as yet in a very advanced

state) spoke highly for 'Uncle Sam's' energy and liberality, where public works are concerned, there was little on the island to see, or to remark upon.

We returned to the house, and enjoyed a plentiful, if not a refined supper, during which the black lady stood behind the chair of her lord and master the overseer, without being allowed to partake of the repast, though the children, to the number of seven, sat round the table perfectly happy, and quite at their ease.

As in the island of Barataria, we slept in a detached house, for which arrangement I confess I was not at all sorry. We saw nothing either to like or approve in the inmates of the principal building, and the state of semi-intoxication in which the lady of the house was found, when summoned to conduct to me to my abode, did not tend to give me a higher opinion of her qualifications for domestic life. She did contrive to stagger across the court to light me to my chamber, but that was quite as much as she was capable of doing, and it was with great difficulty that I ejected her from the room, and barred the door against her return. These details are disagreeable, and I only give them from a wish to offer a veracious description of plantation life.

We rose at five o'clock the following morning, and leaving the old (and I confess, I think, somewhat disreputable) *Don* behind us, embarked in a

small boat which was to convey us through a most intricate navigation, to a large plantation, the owner of which was a friend of our companion, Mr. B——. Our boat was a small, four-oared one, and as it was quite doubtful how long our voyage might be prolonged, we took with us a good stock of provisions. There was a sail in the boat, which was occasionally of use, but when hoisted it required such constant shifting, owing to the frequent turns in the channels, through which we were obliged to thread our way, that it rather delayed than hastened our progress.

The sun was darting fierce rays over our heads, and we had no awning ; but there was a pleasant breeze to keep us alive, and our boatmen rowed cheerily on towards the narrow waters. About twelve o'clock, and when the sun was at its height, I was aroused from a reverie, in which I was pondering on ' things ' not only ' long enough ago,' but also far enough off, by the sudden stopping of our craft, and by the announcement made by one of our boatmen, in a loud whisper, that there was an alligator close to us. And there, true enough, he was—a monstrous animal—within a dozen yards of the boat, and basking on the bank, in happy unconsciousness of our approach. One of our rifles was out in a moment, but the hideous reptile was too quick for us, for being doubtless awake by the noise of the boat going through the water, he

raised his ugly head, and even before the rifle could be levelled at him, was splashing away in the stream with astonishing rapidity.

With the next, which we saw about five minutes afterwards, we were more successful: he, too, was resting on the bank, and being, I suppose, of a more somniferous nature, was shot, in his only vulnerable part—namely, under the shoulder. His death was almost instantaneous, and his body was afterwards hideous to look upon: he might be, as far as we could guess, about fifteen feet in length, and his head appeared to be nearly a third of the length of his whole body. The teeth were frightfully large and long, and the whole appearance of the animal disgusting and *vicious*-looking in the extreme. These alligators are very dangerous creatures; though on land their attacks may be easily avoided, from the unwieldy length of their bodies, which renders *turning* to seize their prey a difficult evolution, in the water they are much to be dreaded, and stories are told, some of which are well authenticated, of *bathers* losing their limbs and lives through the attacks of these voracious creatures. I also heard an account of a poor servant girl, who, while washing some linen in one of the canals in the neighbourhood of New Orleans, had her arm seized by an alligator, and being dragged beneath the surface of the water, became a prey to the hungry monster, and was

seen no more. The skin of the alligator, which is very thick and tough, and, moreover, soft to the touch, is used very much for the covering of saddles ; but except for that purpose, I never heard of them being put to any use after death. We saw hundreds in the course of that sunny sail among the Bayous, and a great many were shot ; but notwithstanding my dislike to the animal, and my conviction of his destructive qualities, I soon grew wearied and pained by the indiscriminate slaughter, and could not bear to witness their death struggles as they floundered about in the water, dyeing the stream with the life-blood which flowed from their wounds.

One only boat, besides our own, did we see on that day's pilgrimage ; she was still smaller than ours, and besides one boatman, contained only a female and three children. They did not always pursue the same course with ourselves, but diverged often into out-of-the-way watery lanes, and round mysterious corners, where for a time they were hidden from our view. Still, we never lost sight of them for long together, and it was evident that their destination was the same as ours.

Towards four in the afternoon, exhausted, hungry, and parched by the almost tropical heat of the sun, we reached such a pleasant grove of thick evergreen oaks, that we determined to run our boat into a creek, which apparently traversed the

wood from one side to the other, and there remain to rest ourselves. With considerable difficulty we forced our way through the thick and overhanging branches of trees ; but when we were fairly in, and sheltered in our little harbour, the delicious change in the atmosphere, and the enchanting beauty of the spot, repaid even those who had toiled the most for all their exertions. The branches of the live oaks literally interlaced each other over our heads, making (with the variety of beautiful creeping plants budding with their early green) a screen, through which the rays of the sun strove in vain to penetrate. The palmetto spread out its graceful fan-like leaves above the short turf, and the air resounded with the song of many birds, already beginning to build their nests among the mossy branches of the oaks. The bright scarlet plumage of the *cardinal*, or Virginian nightingale, as it hopped about in search of food, and the more subdued, but still brilliant coloured *blue-bird*, gave life and animation to the scene ; nor must the graceful active little squirrels be forgotten, as they sprang from bough to bough with fearless agility.

The ilexes were of gigantic size, and the short velvet-like turf was so prettily diversified by patches of ornamental shrubs, that one found it difficult to believe that the hand of man had not done something towards *bringing* out, and making the most of the great natural beauties of this singularly

picturesque spot. Here, then, and near to the abode of what we immediately saw must be that of an Indian family, we agreed to dine, and if possible enjoy a *siesta* after our fatigues. We chose the opposite side of the stream from that on which the pretty little log hut had been erected, for we did not choose to deprive ourselves of the charm which its *presence* added to the *picture* before us. We arranged our repast under the boughs of a far-spreading live oak, there where the 'rill ran o'er, and round, fern, flowers and ivy creep.'

Fantastically tangled ; the *bright rills*
Are *fringed* with early blossoms ; through the grass
The quick-eyed lizard rustles, and the bills
Of summer birds sing welcome as *we* pass ;
Flowers fresh in hue, and many in their class,
Implore the pausing step, and with their dyes
Dance in the soft breeze in a fairy mass ;
The sweetness of the violet's deep blue eyes,
Kiss'd by the breath of heaven, seems colour'd by its skies.

I hardly know *when* we should have found it in our hearts to leave our rural banquet hall, had not the encroachments of myriads of mosquitoes warned us that it was time to depart. The sting of those spiteful little creatures, and the fact of two of our party having encountered snakes within a few yards of the spot where we had been dining, decided us to continue our voyage without further delay. We had no one with us skilled in the capture of the rattlesnake ; among the negroes, men are often

found who are so skilful in the art of securing them, that they feel no alarm at their approach, but, armed only with a cleft stick, they advance fearlessly upon the dangerous reptile, and, quick as thought, thrust their forked weapon into the animal's back, thus pinning him to the earth, and depriving him of the power of motion.

As we descended to our boat, we saw two Indians standing before the door of their hut, who were contemplating us with great composure, and without any apparent surprise. Their costume was a very scanty one, consisting merely of a short blanket thrown over one shoulder, and drawn round their persons ; their limbs were bare, with the exception of the moccasins worn on the legs, and a little red and blue paint traced on the dark skin of their muscular arms. Their faces were free from any such disfigurement, and the head of each was encircled by a species of *fillet*, of what metal composed I know not, but it *glittered like gold*, and gave the wearers a decidedly dignified appearance. One was quite a young man, and the other was probably his father, as he was middle-aged, and the two were strikingly alike ; we left them standing on the bank, their brilliant head-dresses shining in the light of the setting sun, and neither of them deigning to turn their heads to watch us, as we rowed on through the creek.

It is said by many, who have had good oppor-

tunities of observing them, that the intellectual faculties possessed by the generality of the Indian tribes are extremely limited, and in this opinion phrenologists, who have given their attention to the subject, usually agree. It is certain that the many missionaries and instructors who have settled among them have effected very little in the shape of religious good or intellectual development; but to this rule the Cherokees certainly form an exception, as they are evidently far superior (mentally) to any of the other Indian tribes. *They* have made great and rapid progress in the arts and sciences, have schools and colleges of their own, from which *well-dressed* and efficient men have gone forth in various professions, as surgeons, and even as ministers of religion.

But again we were among the Bayous, followed as before, at a respectful distance, by our *tender*, the small *family boat*, which had accompanied us through the day. Night closed her dusky wings upon us, suddenly, as is her habit in these low latitudes, before we reached our resting-places, so that when we *did* arrive at the plantation to which we were bound, it was in darkness that we walked from the shore to the house. And to what shall I compare the boundless, *open-house* hospitality of the southern planter? Shall I go to the far north for its prototype, or shall I tell you, that it can only be equalled by the Arab in his desert

home? It is not only the well-dressed traveller, the desirable acquaintance, the flourishing merchant, with whom they may make an *operation*, or the English 'stranger,' who may afford food for their curiosity, who are always kindly welcomed among them; no, the South-American country gentleman is 'at home' to one and all, and the boat, or wagon load, of care-worn and hungry emigrants is sure to receive the same warm-hearted greeting from the millionaire of the south, as would be bestowed on a party of visitors of his own class and degree.

At Mr. ——'s plantation, we had the satisfaction of finding the refinements of life added to the frank welcome of less civilized society, and I cannot deny that, after the rude existence we had been lately enduring, it *was* enjoyment to find oneself once more in a comfortable drawing-room, and to rest again upon ottomans and soft cushions. The family was a large one of grown-up sons and daughters, and the party in the supper-room numbered eighteen, when, at ten o'clock, we sat down to that social meal. Covers were laid for as many as chose to enter, and partake of the many good things which were spread on the table, of the delicious tea and coffee, and hot meats and cold meats, with preserves of all kinds, cranberry, strawberry, and peach—to say nothing of the cakes and the bread, both corn and wheat, which filled up every corner of the table.

Having enjoyed my tea, and with it some excellent 'chicken fixings,' I was quite willing to retire to my room for the night, when a bustle was heard at the door, and in walked the *female* and the three children whose progress in the small boat we had watched during our voyage. She was the wife of a stonemason employed at the Fort, and as she was desirous of going to 'the city,' the superintendent of the works had allowed her the use of a boat as far as the plantation. They, as well as ourselves, were fed and lodged for the night, though in a different part of the house, and the stonemason's wife, whom I saw for a moment, seemed to make herself quite as much at home as if she were in an hotel or a boarding-house. My bedroom was delightfully comfortable, and it was delightful to ensconce oneself under the clean white mosquito *bars*, (namely *curtains*,) and to feel that there was some chance of awaking in the morning without having been half devoured by those irritating little creatures.

The plantation was on a narrow strip of land, skirted on one side by the Mississippi, and on the other by the Bayous, and as we were to embark early in the morning for New Orleans, in one of the many Mississippi steamers bound for the city, we left the house at six o'clock, and passing through an avenue of orange-trees, reached the river, and also a steam-boat, on which we imme-

diately embarked ourselves and our belongings. We breakfasted on board, and two hours afterwards disembarked at Mr. B——'s sugar plantation, also situated on the Mississippi river.

This plantation is considered as *the* model one of all those on the river, and from what we saw during our short visit, it well deserves the good opinion entertained of it. All the latest agricultural improvements were here acted upon, and we saw the sub-soil plough at work, loosening and breaking up the earth two feet beneath the surface. The good results of which process were, we were told, quite marvellous. The new system, also, of boiling *in vacuo*, was practised at the two sugar-houses, and the sugar which we saw was, in consequence, very nearly white. Having dined, gathered flowers, admired the regularity and order of the negro quarters, and the apparently happy condition of the black dependents, we set off in a very European carriage belonging to Mr. B——, and being drawn by a pair of fast horses, made rapid progress along the river's bank towards the city.

The last part of the journey was performed by railroad, which ran through rather a pretty country, and close to the battle-field of New Orleans, and to the house occupied by the unfortunate General Pakenham previously to the engagement. To an inexperienced person, the first impression made

by a survey of the ground where the battle was fought is, that the position of the English was such as to render their defeat inevitable. The place they occupied lies between the river and the swamp; the distance between each, not being (as I should imagine) more than half a mile. One flank was thus exposed to the assaults of the gun-boats on the river, while swarms of riflemen in the swamp poured in a deadly fire on the other. In front of our troops, the Americans had raised a barrier of cotton bales, which formed a fortification of immense and impregnable strength. Against this formidable obstacle rolled on the 'fiery mass of living valour, but alas! they only rushed against their foes to die! And great and awful was the loss of life on that disastrous day, when English heroism was opposed to American craft, unaided as that heroism was by any local advantages, and thinned as their ranks had been by *desertions*, and by an unhealthy and enervating climate. Many of those who were engaged on the American side have assured me that the acts of heroism performed by the British soldiery on that day were most worthy of their country, and of the brave commander who led them to the field, and 'foremost, fighting fell!'

It was late at night when we reached New Orleans, and relieved the anxiety of our friends, some of whom had, in consequence of the somewhat ad-

venturous character of our expedition, and our protracted stay, become anxious about us. How rapidly spring approaches in these latitudes ! and how cheering it is, when admiring the fresh green leaves and blossoms of the trees, to feel *sure* they will not be checked, as in our less genial climate, by biting winds, and the cruel frosts of April and May ! In the course of little more than a fortnight, the atmosphere has become like summer in England, and we sit at open windows, while the bright oleanders, and the budding orange trees, and myrtles, give out their sweets and beauties around us. And now farewell for the present, I hardly think I shall write again from this place, but it is possible I may do so.

LETTER XXXVII.

MELANCHOLY MENTAL CONDITION OF THE NEGROES
 AFRICAN BLOCKADE—THE COLONY OF LIBERIA—
 ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF SLAVERY
 IN AMERICA—DIFFICULTY OF MAKING THE
 BLACKS PERFORM ANY ACTUAL LABOUR—MISE-
 RIES THEY UNDERGO IN THE FREE STATES—
 CHANCES OF ABOLITION—INJUDICIOUS INTER-
 FERENCE OF GREAT BRITAIN.

New Orleans—March.

IN compliance with your request, that I would give you all the information in my power on the subject of slavery in this country, I shall devote a letter to this interesting topic. It is indeed a most painful reflection, that three millions of human beings should be held in bondage, and compelled to labour, like the beasts of the field, having no will of their own, but being, in point of fact, mere human machines moved at the will and pleasure of their owners. But if slavery itself, as an abstract idea be painful, how infinitely more so does it become, when we consider that a vast number of these despised people are living without God in the world, being entirely destitute of religious instruction, and far removed from any of

the offices of the church. Still, as a counterpoise to such frightful evils as these, we must recollect that the negro race in America are at least Christians in name, and are so far raised above the heathen darkness of their own land.

The partial evils of the system, great as they are, should not make us blind to its possible advantages, nor can we even attempt to understand in *this* case, more than in any other, that great mystery of our Faith—the permission of *evil* in the world. ‘The judgments of the Almighty are indeed unsearchable, and his ways past finding out,’ but the more I reflect on the existence of slavery, the more am I (in all due humility) inclined to believe, that it is the *means* employed for working out a great and most important *end*, and that the much-blamed and reprobated *institution* of slavery is one of the instruments made use of, for the eventual civilization and Christian instruction of the black race throughout the world. What a field for thought does this idea open before us! Almost simultaneously with the discovery of the New World was the abolition of slavery throughout Europe, so that, by degrees, that great moral curse was *transferred* (if I may so call it) to the Western hemisphere; having, after an existence of thousands of years, at length disappeared from the Old World, before the light of civilization and the blessings of Christianity.

The obloquy of having sown the first seeds of this pernicious plant in North America rests on the Dutch, who, in the month of August, 1620, landed twenty negroes at 'James' River ; 'and the immense profits realized from their labour was the chief inducement held out to the numerous adventurers who flocked to the New World. The traffic in human flesh was in those days (as it has been in our own) a most profitable and lucrative one, and was a speculation in which most of the nations of Europe were deeply engaged. The negro population in the western hemisphere must now amount to seven or eight millions, exclusive of those in South America ; and allowing, as I before remarked, that there *are* great evils attending the system, it would, I think, be absurd not to admit the immense advantages they possess in their moral, intellectual, and physical condition, as compared with that of their black brethren in Africa ; nor can it be denied that both the black and white races have derived reciprocal benefit from the servitude to which the poor African is compelled to submit. And here, in justice to the Americans, I must state a fact which admits of no dispute—namely, that in every respect the condition of the negro race in the United States is superior to that in which they are found in Cuba, and also to that of the free blacks in the West Indies.

But there is still another point deserving of

mention, as regards the conduct of the Americans towards the black race, and that is, (startling as the assertion may at first appear,) that the Americans, in my opinion, deserve the credit of having taken the only rational, and effective step towards the suppression of the slave trade. They have not, it is true, expended millions of money, and sacrificed thousands of lives in blockading the coast of Africa, thereby increasing tenfold the horrors of that inhuman traffic, but their exertions through the means of their missionaries to propagate the gospel, and civilize the nations on the African coast have been unceasing, and more than all this, the settlement of Liberia, established by the American Colonization Society, will, in the end, be no doubt the means of putting a stop to the slave trade.

The colony of Liberia is entirely composed of emancipated slaves, sent thither from the United States, and its population already amounts to about ten thousand souls. Their territory extends several hundred miles along the coast of Africa, and various settlements have been made at different points by the several slave states of the Union. The system of government in Liberia is a representative one; it is similar to that of the United States, but no white man is allowed to become a resident in the colony. The report which has been just made of this settlement by the Colonization Society is as

follows:—"The republic contains several flourishing towns, has its own legislature, courts of justice, numerous schools and churches, two or more newspapers—that its inhabitants are successfully engaged in the pursuits of agriculture, trade, and commerce—and that the condition of the entire people, for health, industry, temperance, good order, morality and religion, will compare favourably with any portion of our own country : we may well believe that the success of the project has far outstripped the most sanguine expectations of its early friends, and exhibits results which are an ample reward for all their benevolent and self-denying labours. Truly 'the wilderness' has been made to 'rejoice and blossom as the rose.' "

Experience has, unfortunately, taught us that the negro race when left entirely to their own resources, and solely dependent on their *own* intelligence and industry, instead of *rising*, will rather retrograde than otherwise in the social scale ; still, as regards the settlements in Liberia, it must be remembered that a perpetual stream of industrious and intelligent men will be constantly pouring in from the United States : men who, it is fair to conclude, will have earned the boon of freedom by their previous good conduct, and whose example and experience will tend to keep up the respectability of the colony. May we not, with these facts before us, come to the conclusion that the

bondage of the black race in America is a medium through which it is probable that the heathen portion of benighted Africa may in time be civilized, when 'the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.'

I am aware that in England the opinion is very prevalent, that slavery is injurious to the interests of the United States, and that its existence will probably lead at some future time to a dissolution of the Union. This opinion was at one time my own ; but, since living in the country, I have taken quite another view of the case, and am convinced that slavery, (*unfortunately*, I must add,) is not only the main source of the wealth of America, but that the advantages derived from it render the Northern States and those of the South so dependent on each other, that a separation would be the ruin of both. The value of the annual produce raised by slave labour may, at the very least, be estimated at twenty millions sterling ; and the industry and enterprise of the North, whether they be engaged in manufactures, shipping, or commerce, must always find their most profitable market in the South. Does not this tend to prove that the emancipation of the slaves would be a severe and deadly blow to the general welfare and prosperity of the Union ? All my conclusions are, of course, drawn from the supposition, or rather the conviction, that without slave labour the South

would not produce cotton, sugar, rice, or tobacco, for it is a fact generally admitted, (and, indeed, proved by experience,) that the blacks, unless compelled to do so, will never work in a country where the liberal hand of nature, by supplying all their wants for a minimum of labour, would seem to offer a plea for, as well as a premium to, indolence. Even though among the *masses* a *few* should be found willing to work, the price of their labour would be, of course, so exorbitant, that it would render the culture of the ground totally unremunerative; and that this would infallibly be the case is, I think, sufficiently proved by the present state of our own possessions in the West Indies, where, though the necessaries of life are not half so abundant as in the United States, it has been found impossible to induce the blacks to labour.

Great glory be to England for the noble act which she performed in emancipating her slaves. The deed is registered among the brilliant records of her unbounded charities for ever; and verily those whose Christian benevolence and compassionate feelings prompted the measure, will have their reward. But, in the meantime, what is the result? that the prosperity of our colonies is at an end, and that the condition of the blacks is certainly not improved by that which has cost the people of England so much *public* money, and caused in private life so much severe distress;

neither must it be forgotten that, since the supply of labour in the West Indies has been found wanting, slavery in other countries has received a remarkable impulse.* That the abolitionists of England are generally actuated by the noblest and most philanthropic motives, there can be no doubt, but that their sensibilities are also unduly worked upon by the most marvellous tales concerning the sufferings of the slaves in the United States is, at least, equally certain. The very name of slavery strikes harshly and discordantly on English ears, all our sympathies are at once enlisted on the side of the black race, and we view with suspicion any attempt, either to palliate the evils of the system, or to convince our reason that there is anything but suffering in the portion of the negro slave.

During this, and my former visit to the United States, I have passed nearly a year in the South, and have had good opportunities of ascertaining the true condition of the negro race in this country. This being the case, I have come to the conclusion that the evil exists here in its most modified form, and that the *domestic* slaves are the least unhappy *menials* in the world; moreover, I am convinced that they are very far from being so severely worked as most of the *servants* in free countries. The

* I speak of the West Indies and Cuba as they were when I visited them three years ago.

accounts of the atrocities committed in the plantations are, I have reason to believe, greatly exaggerated: that a great many shocking acts of cruelty and oppression *are* perpetrated by some of the slave-owners in the out of the way parts of Arkansas and the Red River plantations, cannot, I fear, be denied; and, moreover, that the lax state of morals is, in many parts of the South, painful to think upon; but these instances are the exception to the rule, and I have no hesitation in asserting, that the universal public feeling in the South is on the side of humanity.

The laws, though imperfectly enforced, and frequently arbitrary as regards the negroes, have, nevertheless, the effect of protecting them in great measure from personal cruelty, and also from flagrant acts of injustice; and when those, at present lawless and half-settled, districts which I have mentioned as the too frequent scenes of outrage and tyranny, shall be placed *more* within the pale of the law and the influence of public opinion, the lot of the slaves will of course be greatly ameliorated. Public opinion in this country is, as I have before said, far more powerful than the laws, and its influence on society is quite irresistible; there are very few plantations to which its scrutinizing eye does not reach, and it not only insures the good treatment of the slave, but acts as a salutary restraint on the evil passions of the

master. The slaves, generally speaking, are well clothed, and abundantly fed, and are, besides, carefully attended during sickness ; a large proportion of them *do* receive religious instruction, and in many parts of the southern States, Sabbath-schools have been established, and the number of missionaries employed in preaching the word of God amongst them is yearly increasing.

It is true that the law forbids the education of slaves, but notwithstanding this, many of them are well and carefully instructed, and it is impossible to conjecture how great, by this time, might have been their intellectual and moral improvement, had not the injudicious interference of the northern abolitionists effectually arrested the course of amelioration which was, a few years ago, so steadily advancing. That it is the *interest* of the slave-owner to educate his negroes, is a fact which is sufficiently obvious, for a clever engineer, clerk, or handicraftsman of any description, is worth three or four times as much as a common field hand, and the owners of slaves whom they have thus rendered valuable by education can, by letting them out for the day, turn their services to a most profitable account.

Taking a dispassionate view of the condition of the coloured population in the United States, and of all the circumstances connected with the Slave Question, I must confess to you that the conduct

of the abolitionists of the north, (highly as it stands in their own opinion, and upheld as it is by the voices of so many of the *well-meaning* in our own, and other countries,) appears to me far more blameable than that of the slave-owners in the south. The latter are suffering under a baneful infliction which they owe to the cupidity of their forefathers, and which infliction they *feel* to be such, and would willingly rid themselves of could they do so without entailing certain ruin on themselves and their country. But, whilst considering the probable good or evil likely to be derived from abolition, it must not be forgotten that amongst those who would suffer most severely from the emancipation of the slaves, (were such a measure to be carried into effect,) would be those of our fellow countrymen (amounting to more than a million) who are engaged in the manufacture and sale of cotton goods. It is now an acknowledged fact, that the necessary supply of the raw material of the quality required, can only be produced in the United States and by slave labour: this supply Great Britain remunerates by the annual payment of ten millions sterling, and we may therefore imagine how few persons there are, throughout her Majesty's dominions, who do not indirectly encourage slavery, by wearing about them the produce of negro toil.

I shall now give you my reasons for blaming so

strongly the abolitionists of the Northern States, and also show you *why* I consider that their conduct, with reference to the blacks, is both inconsistent and unjust. The treatment of the negroes in the free states is alone sufficient to prove the *injustice* of the abolitionists, and when we consider that the latter *profess* to be actuated by the most philanthropic motives,—to have a horror of slavery, and to act upon the principle that ‘God having made all men equal,’—*they* would confer upon the slaves the blessings of freedom, we come at once upon the inconsistency of which I accuse them. Theirs are high-sounding professions, but the *reality* and the practice are sadly wanting, for the enjoyment by the negro of equal rights with the white man is a privilege which exists only in name.

Let us follow a slave who has gained his freedom, and who is in the first flush of joy at his release from bondage; he has come from the plantations in the South, where he was born and bred, to the city of Philadelphia, the place which he has been taught to regard as the paradise of his race, the home of his *friends*, and the abode where he might hope to enjoy all the delights of his newly-bought liberty. He arrives in the city, but it does not take even the short space of four-and-twenty hours to convince him that all his hopes are doomed to disappointment: the *friends* he had longed to greet, are, *he* finds, his greatest enemies, for,

though the *law* considers him as a citizen, and allows him the right of suffrage, *they* deny him the privilege. Again, the public schools are, by the *law* of the land open alike to the black child and the white, but the *friends* of the former deny admission to those of coloured blood! In short, the poor negro finds, all too soon, that Public Opinion and inveterate prejudice have set the mark of ignominy upon him, that he is avoided as carefully as is the leper of the east, and that he is banished alike from the society of his fellow-creatures and from the tabernacle of his God! To quote the opinion of a very clever writer*—‘He is left in the most pitiable of all conditions—that of a *masterless slave*.’

In comparing the relative positions of the Blacks in the Slave States and those of the North, I must candidly confess to you, that I consider that of the former as infinitely the most deserving of compassion. I always experienced a certain feeling very much approaching to disgust, when I have happened to hear any of the indiscriminate abuse which is so often heaped upon the people of the South, by the northern abolitionists; every sort of crime is generally attributed to the slave-owners, they are execrated as bringing *ruin* on the North, and as a set of bankrupts from whom not a cent is

* Hamilton’s ‘Men and Manners in America.’

to be extracted. If this be true, the question which naturally suggests itself is, what becomes of the hundred millions of dollars produced by slave labour? But this is a query which the complainers themselves can best answer.

While endeavouring to give you a description of the state and treatment of the blacks, I forgot to mention that the northern men are almost invariably hard taskmasters, and that if you happen to hear of a plantation in the South, where an undue degree of severity is exercised towards the negroes, the chances are, in nine cases out of ten, that either the master, or overseer, or both, are Yankees. I have heard it remarked, that the possession of slaves has a tendency to brutalize both the mind and the manners, as well as to harden the heart; in regard to the former assertion, I can only say, that the southern gentlemen *I* have known, have been generally much more refined than those of the North, and indeed, I hardly think that the celebrated diplomatist would have passed that over-severe, but pithy censure on Americans, '*Ils sont des fiers cochons, et des cochons fiers,*' if he had only been in the South, and known the gentlemen thereof.

As to the chances of abolition, about which you are anxious to be informed, there can be, I think, little doubt that the States of Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, and Kentucky will very soon

declare themselves free, and the probability is, that both North Carolina and Missouri will eventually pursue the same course. The fact of the slaves being, in those States, an actual pecuniary evil, renders it a matter of certainty, that some change must ere long be effected; but even supposing that the six States I have mentioned should abolish slavery within their limits, I see no chance of such a proceeding being productive of any good as regards the condition of the unfortunate negroes. Their numbers, in those States, must amount to nearly a million, and it appears almost certain that although the masters would decidedly derive benefit from the measure, the only alteration which it would bring to the negro would be to remove the *locale* of their bondage to the rich and unhealthy bottom lands of Louisiana and Texas, even as their forefathers were formerly transported to the South, when New York and Pennsylvania were declared free States.

If it could be proved by any logic or demonstration, that slavery is, on the whole, decidedly prejudicial to the interests of the United States, I have no doubt that some great national measure would be resorted to in order to remedy the evil; but while the Northern States derive, both directly and indirectly, so much benefit by the continuance of slavery, no such change is likely to occur. It may, perhaps, appear unchristian-like to say so,

but still I believe it is universally allowed that the actions of the American people are guided by their *interests* alone, and that their consciences are deadened by the same selfish views; in short, that the love of dollars is their ruling principle, the pleasant sound of which drowns the still small voice within their breasts. It is this belief, which convinces me, that the abolition of slavery would never be a popular measure with the majority of the American people, and it is for the same reason that I am led to suspect the sincerity of those who, from political or other motives, affect to be the greatest advocates for abolition.

It has been said that the black race in the South are increasing in a greater proportion than the whites, and that the situation of the latter must, consequently, become some day very critical. This observation would have been a just one some years ago, but now the chances of a struggle between the two races are every day becoming less; there are only three States in which the amount of the black population exceeds that of the white, namely, those of South Carolina, Louisiana, and Mississippi, the excess in the first of these is very large, amounting to about sixty thousand, but in each of the two latter it is not more than ten thousand; it must be observed also, with regard to Louisiana and Mississippi, that it is only the white *habitual residents* who are enumerated, for were all the

strangers who are sojourners among them to be included in the estimate, the white population would largely exceed that of the blacks. It is calculated that, during the last ten years, the increase of the whites has been thirty-four per cent, while that of the blacks has not exceeded twenty-three and three-quarters.

That the curse of slavery will rest on the land for generations to come, both in Louisiana and Texas, appears to me almost a certainty, the soil of their cotton and sugar lands being probably the richest in the world, and producing, also, two of the commodities of life which appear most necessary to man. The climate, moreover, is one which precludes the possibility of white labour, and it is therefore fair to conclude that, until the blacks rise to an equality with their present masters, they will be compelled, as heretofore, to labour as slaves. What fate is reserved, in future ages, for the now despised black race is, and must remain, a mystery to us; and if any mighty changes be in store for them, they are at present too distant even for conjecture. It is impossible to justify the *principle* of slavery, and fully as vain to suggest a remedy for the evil. At the Declaration of Independence, seventy years ago, something might possibly have been attempted, though even then the difficulties appeared almost insurmountable. Let us hope that the God of Infinite Justice will not see fit to

leave so large a portion of his creatures in ignorance of his Word, and in a state of slavery for ever; and let us hope, too, that the owners of slaves, will be enabled to see the vast and fearful responsibilities which are entailed upon *them* by the possession, not only of the bodies, but *temporally* of the souls of so many immortal beings. Verily, a strict account will be demanded of those who have not only withheld the word of God from the slaves, but have driven them to the commission of crime through oppression and injustice.

It is in the power of the legislature to do much towards improving the condition of the negro race. At present, many of the laws affecting slaves are not only cruel and unjust, but a disgrace to humanity, and the *friends* of the slaves would do more to benefit their cause by exerting themselves to effect the repeal of such disgraceful statutes than by their injudicious interference with the affairs of the south, and by the virulent censure which they lavish on the slave-owners. It certainly appears that there is no chance at present of a general abolition of slavery in the United States, and the utmost we can hope for in these utilitarian days is, that America will use her power with moderation, and continue her efforts to benefit the black race by means of the African settlements.

One word in regard to the policy of our own country in this matter—namely, that were Great

Britain to devote a twentieth part of the sum which she now annually and very uselessly expends on the prevention of the slave-trade, to a liberal and judicious system of colonization on the coast of Africa, there is every reason to expect that an end could speedily be put to the inhuman and unnatural traffic which has so long been carried on, to the disgrace of humanity, and of the Christian world in particular. America has, in this respect, set us an example which we should not be too proud to follow, and *did* we follow it, the negroes would have far greater cause for thankfulness to England than they have at present, when all they have gained by her injudicious, but well-meant, interference, has been an increase of their sufferings on board the *slavers*, and also of their value on landing, provided always that they have the good fortune to escape death on the passage.

LETTER XXXVIII.

NEW CONSTITUTION FOR THE STATE OF LOUISIANA—
 MR. M'DONOGH—NEW ORLEANS THEATRE—'THE
 MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR'—DEPARTURE FROM
 NEW ORLEANS — INSANE PASSENGER — THE
 'PLANTER'S LADY'—GERMAN MUSICIANS—TRE-
 MENDOUS STORM—HACKET, THE COMEDIAN—
 CROSS THE ALLEGHANIES — MAPLE SUGAR—
 GADSBY'S HOTEL.

Washington—April.

PREVIOUSLY to our departure from New Orleans, there were great rejoicings in the city on account of the proclamation of the new constitution for the State of Louisiana. This change of constitution is another concession to the many-headed monster, the *Mob*, and it appears to me (that like most of the boons which are wrung from the reluctant hands of authority) it is a most injudicious one. The governor of the State had formerly the patronage of all civil, as well as military appointments, the *old* constitution being to this effect: 'The governor shall be commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the State.' 'He shall nominate, and appoint, with the advice of the senate, the

judges, sheriffs, and all other officers.' The *new* constitution enacts that these offices shall now be elective, in other words, entirely in the hands of the people, and thus *their* power and influence, already immense, is becoming daily strengthened.

That the native Americans have not only a strong love of order, but also a great aptitude for self-government cannot be denied. This may, in a great measure, be attributed to the very superior education of the masses, but as the qualities I have mentioned are almost equally observable in the *few* who are uneducated, we must conclude that a remarkable acuteness, where their own interests are concerned, is the grand cause of the well-being of the community. The case is totally different as regards the immense numbers of emigrants who are constantly arriving, and even *here* the dangers resulting from placing power in ignorant and unworthy hands is becoming every day more apparent, and must eventually lead to great and important changes in this overgrown republic. At present, there is *room* for the power to work without much danger to the community, and as the wild beast in the open forests is less to be dreaded, than the same animal when pent up in unnatural confinement, and goaded to desperation by unsatisfied wants, so is the spread of the *people's* power as yet, nothing more in America than '*le commencement de la fin*,' and excites but little

alarm among the reflecting and sober-minded men in the United States. In the meantime, every one we meet is loudly congratulating his neighbour on the attainment of their new constitution : it has given the people, as I said before, the power of electing their own judges, and if we may draw our conclusions from what we know of those in whom this power is vested, the choice is not likely to be a very eligible one. The salary of a judge is only a thousand pounds per annum, and as double this sum is easily realized by lawyers of even moderate talent by *private* practice, the *judges* are not likely to be men of a high order in the profession.

We had the pleasure, a short time before we left New Orleans, of meeting at dinner two Louisiana gentlemen, both of whom are possessed of great wealth and influence in the south, and who also seemed to feel most acutely the reproach cast on their country by the continued existence of slavery. Many interesting facts were brought forward by them, all tending to prove that the mass of the blacks are not so eager for liberty as to be willing to exert themselves by *labouring* for their own emancipation. In several cases, where the attempt has been made to allow them to work out their own freedom, the plan has met with signal failure, and this, almost always from the indifference of the blacks themselves to the object in view. There are, however, instances where a contrary result has

been produced, and one of these was particularly dwelt upon—namely, that of Mr. M'Donogh, a *builder* by profession, but withal one of the wealthiest men in New Orleans, and possessed of several plantations. Mr. M'Donogh seems to be a man remarkable for energy and talent, and the system he has pursued with regard to his slaves has succeeded admirably; but it must be remembered, that there are very few individuals who would be able to acquire over their slaves the same moral influence which he has attained; and I understand also that Mr. M'Donogh is very particular in his *choice* of slaves, and in the purchase of them shows much discrimination, preferring all those whose previous good character and general appearance lead him to expect a fair degree of intelligence and moral rectitude. The system he has pursued is so interesting, that I shall send you his own account of it as published in the newspapers here.*

Our last evening at New Orleans was spent at the Theatre, to witness the performance of the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, the character of *Falstaff* being admirably supported by the clever American comedian Hacket. Henry Clay joined us in our box, and also some of the friends who had so largely contributed to make our stay in America

* See Appendix.

agreeable. Mr. Clay's remarks on the English drama, and his critiques on the plays of Shakspeare were delivered with an elegance of diction, and an acuteness of criticism, which made them highly interesting.

Our passage to Louisville was taken on board the 'Sultana,' a new boat, and beautifully fitted up. But I am not going to dwell long upon the incidents of our voyage *up* the river, though this I must say, that it bore no comparison, in point of agreeableness, with our previous voyage *down* the Mississippi. One of the passengers was a maniac—a harmless one, I believe—but his madness had not taken a lively turn, and, as his aberration of mind was the consequence of severe losses from a shipwreck, on which occasion he had narrowly escaped with life, he made great resistance when his keeper and his servant brought him on board, and within sight of the element which he dreaded. Then we had in the saloon a deaf and dumb girl, who was in every respect a most painful object, and who was being conveyed to the excellent institution for persons similarly afflicted, at Boston; and there was besides, a *lady* from New Orleans, who was proceeding to Louisville in consequence of a letter which she informed us she had just received, and which announced to her the dangerous illness of her husband, who was staying in that city. It was not a cheerful party by any means, and the only

enlivenment to the gloom was a band of German musicians, who played their national airs beautifully, sometimes on deck, and in the evenings in the saloon.

The stewardess (always an important personage in every steam-boat) amused me very much by her extreme dignity and self-sufficiency; she was a dirty, untidy, middle-aged woman, very much like a London charwoman of an inferior description; and when I, on seeing her, (quite forgetting the strong prejudice which exists against all emigrants from the 'sister isle,') asked her if she was an Irishwoman, her indignation was great. 'Well,' she replied, 'I expect you might have seen that I was a *Welch lady*! my name's *Mrs. Davies*, and I have objections to being called stewardess by any body.' She and her husband had come out some years ago from the neighbourhood of Swansea, when the latter, after obtaining lucrative employment in the coal districts, died from drinking, and his *lady* became a stewardess.

There was a lady on board, the wife of a rich southern planter; she had her two children with her, and several black *servants*, and, according to the Welch stewardess, was 'dreadful proud.' 'Thinks herself too *good*, indeed, to speak to me, and after all, we're all equal, ar'n't we?'—appealing to me. My answer rather puzzled her: 'As long as *she* has five dollars to give you for being civil

and attentive, and as long as you are poor enough to be glad to earn them, I cannot allow that you and Mrs. —— are at all on an equality.' Whether I imposed on her by my sententiousness, or worked upon her avarice by my implied reward, I cannot say, but from that moment she was never familiar or intrusive, but was ready to do everything in her power for my comfort and accommodation. I have said a good deal about the 'Sultana' stewardess, because she belongs to a class often met with in America, and one which renders travelling in that country often very disagreeable to an English-woman ; and, moreover, because I wish to do justice to the descendants of the ancient Britons, by remarking how greatly *they* distinguish themselves in their adopted country, by their stupid assertions of the equality of all men and women, and by their absurd boasts of being one and all ladies and gentlemen. '*Les égalités ne sont pas dans la nature,*' and if not in nature, they are surely not to be found in society, and least of all in a society so shifting as that in America, where the very precariousness of the tenure renders those in an elevated position the most tenacious of their rights. It is in vain that in this country we look for the *practice* of that popular but most fallacious theory of their original constitution, 'that all men are equal ;' and, as to the absence of an aristocracy, that is equally impossible, for grades and degrees of conventional

rank (though, happily, not quite so distinctly marked) exist in the United States as decidedly as in any other country in the world, and, from what I have seen, I am convinced that an hereditary respect for an aristocracy, amounting almost to a wish to possess one, is an *English* quality which has never been eradicated from American character.

I took great interest in the 'planter's lady,' who, as well as her children, was very indolent, pretty, and well dressed. By the way, did I ever tell you that many American ladies both *chew* and —— ! It was a good while before I discovered of what the *quid* was composed, which it was very evident reposed in a corner of their pretty mouths, but at last I ascertained that it was a species of nut, and in the south particularly the habit of chewing it is very general. I would forgive them for the practice, if it were not for the consequences. But I must return to the Creole lady: she asked me innumerable questions about England, but more especially as regarded the Queen — questions which I should imagine no one but her Majesty herself could be qualified to answer. I gave her one piece of information with which she seemed very much struck ; it was on the subject of the great simplicity of dress habitual to the royal children. I verily believe that my astonished companion had previously figured to herself that the little creatures were

dragged about in ermine, velvet, and jewels. I was amused by her expressing her conviction that, were this 'interesting fact' generally promulgated in the United States, the extreme *finery* of the children here would be greatly modified. Do not you consider this remark as among the many proofs of the influence which the example of the highest ranks in England may, and does, have on manners and habits in America?

In return for *my* information, Mrs. ——— talked to me about *her* land, and especially about *her* plantation. There was not much in what she said worthy of being recorded, but she *did* advocate strenuously the advantages of kind treatment as applied to slaves. 'They will do more work for me,' she said (as a proof of the goodness of her cause)—'they will do more for me when I give them a *slap*, than for all the overseer's punishments.'

It was very curious to think of that little feminine, child-like hand *slapping* a great tall negro, and I could well understand the punishment not being a very unpleasant one; but what an unfeminine exercise of power!—and how bad and pernicious an effect may this arbitrary rule have upon the minds of both the owners and their children!

After one very sultry day, we had a tremendous storm of wind, rain, thunder, and lightning. The

uproar without was tremendous, the tempest rolled 'its awful burden on the wind,' and the blue and forked lightning darted against the unsheltered *skylight* of the saloon. I never witnessed a more fearful storm; the German musicians continued for awhile to pour forth their inspiring strains, but soon the echoing thunder overpowered the music, and all was confusion; and then it was that the poor maniac in his cabin caught the excitement of the general fear, and howled and yelled in the extremity of his agony. But the scene of distress and tumult was not yet complete, for in the midst of it the vessel went ashore! It would be vain to attempt a description of what followed; the shock was great, and the alarm of all on board, particularly the ladies, painful to witness; and the dread of the Mississippi tragedies is so deeply rooted, that it was very long before anything like tranquillity was restored. We remained stationary till morning, and then, after an hour spent in repairing damages and getting the vessel off, we were on our way again. The next morning, while stopping at one of the landings, the *lady* on board the 'Sultana,' who had a sick husband awaiting her (as she thought) at Louisville, was greeted with the intelligence that the unfortunate gentleman was no more, but that his *body* was on board a steamer which was puffing alongside of ours, and was on its way to New Orleans, and the *disconsolate*

widow ;—I can see her now, as she stood shading her eyes from the sun, and asking particulars of her friend, who had hailed her from the other steamer. She neither seemed surprised nor shocked, but after a little mental hesitation decided *not* to accompany the remains of her husband *down* the river, but to pursue her voyage to Louisville, as she had originally intended. I never saw so composed a widow ; she never absented herself from any of the meals, and ate and drank quite comfortably, a little serious sometimes, but nothing more. People have no *time* to think of death in America.

We had no more adventures till we reached Louisville, at which place we stopped, and the next morning departed, in another steamer, for Cincinnati. After leaving Louisville, I found myself seated at dinner next to a very agreeable and gentlemanlike person, one who possessed *l'usage du monde*, as well as a gift which I value highly—namely, that of the ‘ touch and go’ of conversation ; in other words, he never *hammered* at one subject, or wore an argument or discussion threadbare. I soon felt a great curiosity to know who my neighbour was, and the more so from the tone of his voice being quite familiar to my ear ; still I could not affix to him a profession, name, or station, and was wondering and pondering greatly on the subject when the object of my cogitations suddenly exclaimed, on seeing me struggling in vain to dis-

member a tough and ancient bird, which had made its appearance on the table, 'Another fault in the semblance of a fowl! think on't Jove!—a fowl fault!' After all, it was Falstaff, and none else, who, having pulled off his buck's head, had taken passage in the Cincinnati steam-boat. Impossible to help laughing at the transmogrification! The 'mountain of flesh' rolling about the boards, the best impersonification of the fat old *roué* that ever was seen, was turned into a mild, gentlemanlike, slender individual, as unlike the lover of the merry Mistress Ford as it was possible to be. He was both amused by our surprise and gratified by our expressions of admiration at his performance, and in return he entertained us till a late hour of the night with his theatrical reminiscences, and his recitations of different passages of Shakspeare, of whose genius he is a most enthusiastic admirer. He was travelling north on his way to Europe, having some professional engagements to fulfil at Philadelphia and new York, after which he intended to take his final leave of theatrical life.

We arrived in safety at Cincinnati, where we passed the night, but were early *en route* the following morning. We had invited Mr. Hacket to be our companion in our 'exclusive extra' across the Alleghany Mountains, but he was, unfortunately a *minute* too late for the steam-boat, on which *we* were already embarked for Brownsville,

and we were obliged in consequence to leave him, lamenting on the shore, and parted from Falstaff's coat and stuffings, which were all on board, and far enough removed from the reach of their owner. We were very sorry for the fate of our quondam fellow-passenger, and for the inconvenience which he would be certain to suffer from the absence of his theatrical habiliments; the captain could not return or wait for him, from the danger of his high-pressure engine blowing us into the air—so away we went, regretting very much, for our own sake, the loss of the actor's pleasant companionship.

There was a great deal of snow on the mountains, and sledges were, on the high grounds, still in use—the roads were in a worse state than ever, and the difficulty at some of the stages of obtaining horses very great. *Members* were flocking up to congress, and the whole world seemed with one accord to be moving north, so that we were often kept waiting a long time for horses, and all the inns on the road were filled to overflowing. The trees in the valleys were beginning to put on their spring livery of green, and at the foot of every maple-tree was placed a little wooden trough, into which the sap (trickling from a small perforation made in the tree, about a foot from the ground) descended slowly, but constantly.

We found our hotel at Baltimore full of members of congress, with and without their families,

and were glad to hasten on to Washington, where we have established ourselves in Gadsby's Hotel, already familiar to us, and not easily to be forgotten by reason of the dust, sun, noise, and mosquitoes, which do here abound. And now to conclude. I shall have much to say of public matters in my next, and a mail is going to England.

LETTER XXXIX.

THE 'CAPITOL'—DESCRIPTION OF THE SENATE
CHAMBER AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—
JOHN QUINCY ADAMS — PRESIDENT POLK —
AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS—EVENING PARTY AT
THE 'WHITE HOUSE.'

Washington—April.

WE have now been a week at Washington—the 'city of magnificent distances,' as it is called. Why, we have not, as yet, been able to guess, but I suspect the name is given in ridicule, as Washington is certainly not a popular city with the Americans. Our hotel is situated very near the railway terminus, and in the centre of the fashionable promenade, y'clept Pennsylvania avenue, which avenue extends from the 'Capitol' to the *White House*, as the abode of the President of the country is modestly called. These two buildings stand on rising ground, at either end of the avenue, on one side of which is the swamp, extending down to the Potomac river, and on the other, the straggling and unfinished streets of the town.

In Washington, we almost find ourselves for-

getting that we are in store-keeping America; the conversation turns more upon politics than on trade; a somewhat aristocratic air is breathed over the city, and the fact that the representatives of European royalty are here assembled, brings back to us thoughts and ideas connected with our own distant hemisphere. All these causes contribute to render Washington more agreeable to an English person for a short residence, than any other city in the Union.

The 'Capitol' is the principal place of resort for every idler, (and there are many idlers at Washington,) and certainly within its walls no one can be at a loss for amusement. You enter it (having first ascended a somewhat steep *hill*) by a noble flight of stone steps, leading you into the Rotunda, which occupies the centre of the building. This Rotunda is about a hundred feet in diameter, and as many in height, being surmounted by a cupola, to the summit of which you may ascend by a staircase, and when there enjoy a magnificent view of the city, river, and surrounding country. On the walls of the Rotunda are several large pictures, sufficiently well executed, and also some alto-relievos, all of which represent incidents connected with the American Revolution.

The Capitol also contains the Hall of Representatives, the Senate Chamber, a fine library, and various committee-rooms, offices, &c. &c. The

Hall of Representatives, and the Senate Chamber, are both worthy of admiration, being of a semi-circular form, and ornamented with columns, which support the gallery appropriated to the use of strangers. Let us first enter the *lower* house, and convince ourselves by ocular observation of the appropriateness of its name. Here we see about two hundred and fifty individuals collected, and, as we look down upon them from the height, they present a curious spectacle.

There is a great sameness both in the features and countenances of the Americans, and a *sharp* look is common to all, moreover, though a *few* were remarkably *smart*, (I use the word here as applied to their costume, and not to their mental qualifications,) the majority were clothed in the inevitable black silk waistcoat, which I have everywhere noticed, and put their thumbs (when they were not whittling) into the pockets of the said waistcoats just as usual. The noise is generally so overpowering that it is hardly possible to hear a word that proceeds from the mouth, or more properly speaking the *nose*, of the orator, who flatters himself that he is addressing the House. It not unfrequently happens that two or three members rise at once, and in their zeal to hear themselves talk, almost come to blows for the possession of the floor, whilst the noises and cries made by 'honourable members,' are wonderful in the ex-

treme. From one part of the House, the crowing of a dozen cocks enlivens the assembly, while in another the loud braying of as many donkeys, or the ‘gobble, gobble,’ of some angry turkey-cocks, is imitated to the life by the Representatives of this great People. A *paper-war* is sometimes carried on by means of pellets hastily formed of official reports, or the newspapers of the day, and thrown dexterously at the heads of drowsy, or thoughtful members, and as each of them is provided with a thing—called, I believe, a *spittoon*—and also with a whittling-knife, there is, on the whole, no dearth of employment.

In the midst of all this din, noise, confusion, and vulgarity, is seen the patriarchal figure of the great statesman, John Quincy Adams. Here, surrounded by the sounding brass and tinkling cymbals of ‘Young America,’ the light of genius, and of pure, unsullied patriotism ‘burns on as in a sanctuary,’ and though the oil which feeds the glimmering lamp is low, and the last flickering rays of light are streaming upwards, there is still a fire in the old man’s eye, and a power in his voice, which is never raised without commanding silence and attention.*

* Since writing the above, this distinguished statesman has ‘paid the debt of nature.’ He died suddenly in his place in the representative chamber, at a very advanced age, and universally regretted.

The Hall is covered with a rich carpet, *once* new and clean, and the members are accommodated with comfortable arm-chairs; and, in addition to these luxuries, they each receive the sum of eight dollars a day for their services, besides having their travelling expenses paid to and from the seat of government. After the description I have given you, you will at once perceive that it is neither the most talented, the most respectable, nor the wealthiest citizens, who find their way into the Lower House. The truth is, that few of those belonging to the above classes are willing to submit to the necessary degradation entailed upon the candidates for such questionable honours, and moreover it would seem that the people themselves prefer Representatives whose habits and sentiments are somewhat on an equality with their own.

The style of eloquence which prevails in the Lower House may easily be imagined. Each member represents thirty thousand of his fellow-citizens, and considers himself *bound* to make a certain number of speeches, both in honour of his constituency, and also as a means of insuring his own re-election. The speeches of any individual member display generally a rare indifference to the matter in debate, and also to the *party* to which the orator may happen to belong, for he considers that he has fulfilled his duty when he has spoken

one hour about his own district, and enabled his constituents to read his speech in the newspapers.

It is recorded of a very long-winded gentleman, who had been boring the House till the patience of every member was exhausted, that, when a friend gently hinted to him that his hour had expired, and moreover that he was not speaking on the subject before the House—he replied, with great ingenuousness, ‘Well, I guess I ar’nt addressing the House at all—I am talking to *Bunkum*, I am.’ Now, *Bunkum* was the name of the district of which this single-minded gentleman was the representative, and the expression of ‘talking Bunkum’ has now passed into a common saying in the United States.

After all, it would be very unfair for a stranger to draw his conclusions, or form his opinions of the American people from the characters or demeanour of their representatives as they appear in the Hall of Representatives. It is a disagreeable reflection to *us* that the worst amongst them invariably owe their election either to our own countrymen, or to the German emigrants who flock to this country. The votes of these people, most of whom are sprung from the very dregs of society, are given to the candidate who professes the greatest degree of inveterate animosity to Europe and its institutions, and the result of the American elec-

tions, and the return of the low-minded and prejudiced Locofocos by our own countrymen should be alone sufficient to convince every Englishman of the unfitness of our own people for the privilege of universal suffrage. But enough of the noisy representatives of the 'free citizens of the United States.' To parties interested in the reputation of this assembly, it must be a satisfaction to feel that very little of what is said is audible in the gallery—or, indeed, any where else, for the hall is so badly constructed for hearing that even were it possible for silence to be obtained, it would be difficult to arrive at the sense (supposing there *were* any) of any speech therein delivered.

Let us now (having quitted the Hall of Representatives, which is situated in the *south wing* of the Capitol) descend again into the Rotunda, and make our way to the senate chamber, which occupies the *north wing* of the building. The chamber itself (except in point of size) differs but little from the Hall of Representatives; but the contrast afforded by the members of the two houses is striking in the extreme. The senate consists at present of fifty-four members, two being sent from each State. It cannot be said that they are elected by universal suffrage, for they are chosen by the legislature of the different States for the term of six years, one-third of them being elected biennially.

Hence their superiority over the representatives, who are directly the result of universal suffrage.

Many of the most remarkable and distinguished men in America are to be found in the Senate—its members generally are every way qualified to represent the great country to which they belong, and to uphold the name of America among the nations of the earth. The debates are conducted with a degree of dignity and decorum not to be surpassed by any legislative assembly in Europe ; the style of oratory is, on the whole, very respectable, and the speakers generally seem to keep in view the interests of their country, without being led away by party feeling

The debates, to which we are now daily listening, are carried on in a moment of the greatest possible excitement, the Oregon question being on the eve of settlement, and *that* settlement involving the mighty question of peace or war with the mother country. Though the subject is one which causes an unusual violence of feeling among all parties in the United States, it is gratifying to perceive in how trifling a degree the debates in the senate are affected by the popular excitement. With *one* exception, nothing can be more *gentlemanlike* than the tone in which the War Question is discussed, and I need hardly add that the member thus excepted represents a State, the majority of whose

population is composed of foreigners. *His* was the only case in which I heard either unfair or discourteous language applied to England, or her representative spoken of in other terms than those of the highest respect and admiration.

The members of the Senate are for the most part intellectual and striking-looking men, and their appearance is altogether that of gentlemen. I should not venture to say so much of the Lower House, and nowhere can one feel more forcibly the difference produced by the costume of gentlemen fifty years ago, as compared with that worn in the present day. In looking at the representatives of the American people, one can scarcely believe they are the descendants of those respectable and serious-looking worthies who signed the declaration of independence, and whose portraits now ornament the walls of the Capitol. Surely there is something dignified in a *pigtail*, and the powdered head and dressy costume of the last century certainly produce a very pleasing effect when contrasted with the neglected locks and shabby appearance of the majority of the present House of Representatives.

The President of the Republic has, at this moment, a most difficult card to play, for, having been brought in by the Locofocos, he is obliged to *appear* hostile to England, even at the risk of sacrificing thereby the peace and prosperity of his

country. The standard of principle, by which American statesmen are governed, has of late years been sadly lowered, and I have heard it affirmed, by many unprejudiced Americans, that the policy of their Presidents is almost invariably one of expediency, for, by *humouring* the majority, they take the most effectual means of insuring their own re-election. But the difficulty under which Mr. Polk at present labours, is that of discovering to which side the wishes of the majority actually lean. The newspapers here (and their name is Legion) are, notwithstanding their numbers, quite inefficient as a means of judging the state of public opinion; generally speaking, the opinions which they adopt are those most likely to induce a copious sale of the paper itself, and thus all idea of maintaining any degree of political consistency is at once abandoned.

As a proof of this assertion, I will instance an anecdote, which, whether true or not, serves to show the low opinion which the people themselves entertain of their newspapers. A gentleman informed me, that while travelling a few weeks ago in the North, he refused to purchase a well-known New York paper, on the grounds that it was 'Locofoco.' 'Not at all,' replied the vender: 'this is Wednesday, so it's Whig to-day.' There are a few striking exceptions to the rule, but on the whole, the low character of the public press is

so generally recognised by the people, that it cannot be said to have much influence as a political engine. I am of opinion, that the leading articles in our first English papers exercise a greater influence over the opinions of the people in the United States than the whole of their own put together. It is curious to observe how anxiously they are looked for with the arrival of each European mail, and with what rapidity they are republished in every American newspaper throughout the United States, even to the most remote settlements in the Far-West.

The dinners at our hotel do not pass off very agreeably ; there are a great many negro waiters rushing about, with their sleeves tucked up, and jostling one another in their eagerness to supply the wants of every one of the guests at the same time ; while a tone of party spirit, which, if it does not actually degenerate into quarrelling and rudeness, hovers very near their confines, keeps one in a constant state of agitation. The subject of slavery is frequently discussed, and the disputes thereon are often frightfully warm. Among other remarks, I heard a southern gentleman affirm, that the Northern States are, in reality, even more opposed to the abolition of slavery than the South, and he related the following occurrence to strengthen his argument.

About two years ago, the petition of a free

negro, who was about to be sold for the payment of gaol fees, was before Congress, on which occasion several members from the North declared, that in the case of a proposition to abolish slavery in the South, nine hundred and ninety-nine men in the North out of a thousand, would be against the measure, as its success would have the effect of 'flooding *them* with a black population.' I have ascertained that this is perfectly true, and it confirms the opinion I had already formed in regard to the *sincerity* of the Northern advocates for abolition.

Benecroft Library

As we were unwilling to leave Washington without paying a visit to the *White House*, Mr. Pakenham kindly accompanied us there, on one of the evenings appropriated to general reception, and presented us to the President and to Mrs. Polk. A great deal has been said by travellers in America, in disparagement of the society one is likely to meet with on these occasions, and I have heard it remarked, and also seen it promulgated in books, that the lowest dregs of the people enter the presence of the President, without ceremony, keep on their hats in the reception rooms, smoke, &c. without any respect for persons, and, in short, conduct themselves in a most unseemly manner. All this *may* have been the case formerly, and it may also be said, that my observations on the occasion of one solitary visit, give me no right to

speaking confidently of the nature of these *re-unions* generally. 'Nevertheless, I can hardly conceive, judging from the strictness of etiquette which I saw observed at the *White House*, that these assemblages can ever degenerate into the species of *bear garden* which many writers have described them to be.

The President himself is an insignificant, quiet-mannered individual, whose intention evidently is to be remarkably courteous and polite; he seems also to have had sufficient tact to discover, that, not being likely, either from his previous habits or his personal appearance, to produce an *effect* in society, his most prudent course is 'to wear a black coat and hold his tongue.' The *presidentess* is not only a very pleasing person in manner, but (if we may believe the many tongues of common report) is possessed of no inconsiderable degree of talent. The dress, both of ladies and gentlemen, differed in no respect from that which one is accustomed to see in evening society, both in London and Paris, the display of diamonds was very respectable, and setting aside the dullness—of which there was rather more than an average quantity—there was very little either to provoke ridicule, or justify invidious remarks. To-morrow, we leave for Boston, so I shall close this letter here.

LETTER XL.

DEPARTURE FROM WASHINGTON — AUTHOR OF
 ‘HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS’ — INSTITUTION OF
 THE BLIND AT BOSTON—AN ICEBERG—A WRECK
 DISCOVERED — PLEASANT VOYAGE—ARRIVAL AT
 LIVERPOOL.

‘Hibernia’ at Sea—April.

ONCE more upon the salt waters ! Once more
 careering over the waters, and steering to-
 wards our homes ! our good ship ‘bounds beneath
 us’—with a thousand horse power, and almost
 every heart on board of her seems light with joyful
 expectation. Two thousand miles a-head — ay,
 and more—also are the green hills of Ireland, and
 the white cliffs of our own land, but every day
 diminishes the distance, and the strong westerly
 wind helps us hopefully on to the Old World once
 more.

The day following that on which I despatched
 my last letter to you from Washington, we bade
 adieu to that city, and commenced our route
 towards the north. Our journey, which occupied
 three days, was an uneventful one, but I must not
 forget to tell you that we were not without com-

panions—agreeable ones, too—on the road, having had the good fortune to be joined by the author of ‘Highways and Byways,’ M. Calderon de la Barca, the Spanish minister, an English ex-attaché, and one or two other homeward-bound, and far from unintelligent ‘Britishers.’

We had two days to spare at Boston, previous to the departure of the steamer for England, and one of these we devoted to the ‘inspection’ of the excellent institution for the blind. We spent a long day among them, admiring the wonderful patience and skill with which their burthen is rendered bearable to them, and the extraordinary intelligence which many of them display. The details respecting this institution have been so often and so ably given, that you must, I am sure, be familiar with them—therefore, I shall content myself with telling you, that we saw and *conversed* both with Laura Bridgman, and Oliver Caswell, the two cases which excite so much interest and curiosity.

They were both born deprived alike of *hearing*, *sight*, and *speech*, and yet *now*, they are not only rational and thinking creatures, but are well informed in a degree infinitely superior to that of most of their condition in life, and are capable of reading, and otherwise employing themselves in a manner both amusing and profitable. Verily, these good Samaritans are appointed to make the

dumb to speak, the blind to see, and the benighted and ignorant to understand, and to 'lay up knowledge.'

Our last evening was passed in the most agreeable society of Boston, and yet there was a shade of melancholy on our spirits, for we felt we were leaving (perhaps for ever) many kind and hospitable friends. After all, though there is much to censure in the land we have left, a person must indeed be strongly prejudiced, who does not find infinitely more to admire than to condemn.

America is still a very young republic, for, great and unexampled as is the progress she has made during her seventy years of independent existence—what are seventy years in the long histories of nations?—every day (as we have had ample opportunities of observing) she makes a step—I might well call it a *stride* in her advancement—and though at present she is certainly not (except in the matter of *size*) '*the greatest* country on airth,' I have no doubt that the time will come when she may in every respect, *and without boasting*, lay claim to that proud distinction. In commerce, she is already no despicable rival of the first nation in the world—civilization and refinement, with the arts and sciences in their train, are making sure, though perhaps not rapid, progress amongst her citizens, and every revolving year seems to add to her prosperity. Let Europe

and Europeans (who *are* jealous of America, as America of *them*) deny it as they may, there is among England's descendants in the west, *l'étoffe des grands hommes*, they are now toiling up the ascent which the Old World has trod before them—the latter is arrived at the apex; what next will follow, who can say? If the race in this case 'be to the swift,' and the 'battle to the strong,' America will reach the summit sooner than those that have gone before her; and when there, let us pray that *England be found there also*.

There are more Americans than English on board, for it is the season when the former set off on the *grand tour*, to enjoy, as a stout gentleman here calls it, 'a run in Italy.' There is among the passengers a somewhat gloomy-looking individual in a gray paletot, who is said to have left his native land for a *little change*, having for the moment depressed his spirits by putting an end to the existence of his wife and friend, in a fit of jealous rage. He eats well, however, and his friends may have the satisfaction of hoping to see him 'all right' again soon.

We had but two *events*, if such they might be called, to break the tedium of the voyage—one was the sight of a large iceberg, glittering like polished silver under the rays of the sun, and the other, was the falling in with a wreck. Every one rushed on deck when the latter was signalled, and

every eye was fixed on the vessel, which lay half hid, and washed over by the waves, waterlogged, and with a few tattered rags of sails, flapping from the small masts which still remained standing. There was rather a heavy sea on, so the captain gave orders, as it was blowing fresh at the time, to have all ready to lower the life-boat, in case there should be any survivors on the wreck to whom we might render assistance. We went quite close to the little vessel, near enough to convince ourselves whether or not there were any starving or drowning creatures on board; but we strained our eyes in vain, she was devoid of any human occupant, and after making out from the letters on her stern that she was from Savannah, a timber ship, (which prevented her sinking,) we went on our way. What had been the fate of the crew which had manned her, we had of course no means of ascertaining, whether the 'winds and waves had hurled them thence,' and 'without their will had carried them away,' or whether

'Famine, despair, and cold, and thirst had done
Their work on them by turns, and thinn'd them to
Such things, a mother had not known her son
Amidst the skeletons of that gaunt crew.'

But we left the wreck to float on in her desolation, we knew not whither; and, perhaps, (guided by unseen currents, and the capricious winds of Heaven,)

she may, rudderless and bereft though she be, find a haven at last.

But now, after a short and prosperous passage, Liverpool is *said* to be in sight—nothing, however, can be less veracious than the assertion. All that *is* in sight is a thick veil composed of a mixture of cold fog, small rain, sea-mist, and coal smoke; the Americans look very blank, especially the ladies, who have donned their favourite finery to produce an effect on landing; and I must confess, that I feel thoroughly ashamed of my climate. ‘None of your confounded blue skies here,’ quoted the ex-attaché, as he stood, shivering and miserable, at the ship’s side, watching the dragging up of the mail-bags from the strongholds of the vessel.

It is only *now* that I feel I am really saying ‘farewell’ to America. These splendid vessels are a sort of *neutral ground*, and while on board them, one can almost still fancy oneself in *Yankee land*; now, however, all this delusion is over, but in spite of fogs, of rain, and smoke, I feel that it is England still, and I am glad to be at home again!

APPENDIX.



APPENDIX.

LETTER OF JOHN M'DONOGH ON AFRICAN COLONIZATION.

MESSRS. EDITORS:—

IN a piece wrote by me in June last, on the subject of sending away some of my black people to Africa, and published in your paper of the 24th of that month, I observed, 'that the act of sending those people away is, in my case, one of simple honesty alone.' I lay no claim, nor am I entitled to any credit or praise, on the score of generosity. My meaning in the above assertion I will explain, Messrs. Editors, through your paper, (should my leisure admit of it,) at some future time, and the rather, as it may perhaps be of service to the slaveholders of the State, to know how one, who has had much to do for forty years past with the treatment of slaves, has succeeded in it. When they find from my experience, that they can send their whole gangs to Africa every fifteen years, without the cost of a dollar to themselves, what master will refuse to do so much good, when it will cost him nothing in the doing it, and afford him at the same time such high gratification, in knowing that he has contributed to the making many human beings happy. For my experience will show that, with a proper treatment of slaves, the gain from their extra labour, (that is, labour over and above that

which slaves in general yield their owners,) in the course of that time—say fifteen years, will enable their masters to send them out, and purchase in Virginia and Maryland, (with the gain made from said extra labour,) a gang of equal number to replace them. In addition to which, what an amount of satisfaction (I would ask every humane master) would he not enjoy, in knowing that he was surrounded by friends, on whose faithfulness and fidelity he and his family could rely, under every possible contingency? In fulfilment, then, of said promise, I now undertake to explain the observation I then made, ‘That the act of sending those people away is, in my case, one of simple honesty alone;’ and to set forth and show the mode I adopted and pursued, (after much experience and reflection on the subject,) for many years in their treatment and its results. Before commencing, however, this long detail of treatment and its attending circumstances, I will premise to those who feel an interest in the subject, and will take the trouble to read this recital, that it is one of egotism throughout; it tells of what the master said and what he did, from the beginning of the chapter to its end,—in this, therefore, I will be excused: it is what I promised, and there is but one way of telling the story to make it intelligible. To proceed then, and give you the plan which I laid down for myself, and have pursued for the last seventeen years, for the conduct and management of those I held in bondage, I have to observe, that having been at all times opposed to labouring on the Sabbath day, (except in cases of actual necessity,) one of my rules for their walk and guidance in life always was, that they should never work on that holy day, prohibited as we were from so doing by the divine law. A long expe-

rience, however, convinced me of the utter impossibility of carrying it out in practice by men held in bondage, and obliged to labour for their master six full days in the week; and I saw on reflection, much to extenuate, as to them, the offence against my rule. They were men, and stood in need of many little necessities of life not supplied by their master, and which they could obtain in no other way but by labour on that day. I therefore had often to shut my eyes and not see the offence, though I knew my instructions on that head were not obeyed; and in consequence, after long and fruitless exertions (continued for many years) to obtain obedience to that injunction, I determined to allow them the one-half of Saturday (say Saturday from mid-day until night) to labour for themselves, under a penalty well understood by them, of punishment for disobedience, (if they violated thereafter the Sabbath day,) and sale to some other master. From this time, which was about the year 1822, the Sabbath day was kept holy—church was regularly attended, forenoon and afternoon, (for I had a church built expressly for them on my own plantation, in which a pious neighbour occasionally preached on the Sabbath day, assisted by two or three of my own male slaves, who understood, preached, and expounded the scriptures passably well, and at times I read them a sermon myself,) and I perceived in a very short time a remarkable change in their manners, conduct, and life, in every respect for the better. We proceeded on in this way, happy, prosperous, and blessed in every respect by the Most High, for about three years, or until 1825, when, seeing the amount of money which they gained by their Saturday afternoon's labour, (they in general laboured for myself, though they were permitted to

labour for whom they pleased, giving the preference to their master, even at a less rate of wages, on whose honesty they could depend for payment, for they were paid as regularly as the night came,) in the long days of summer I paid the men for their Saturday afternoon's labour at the rate of $62\frac{1}{2}$ cents per day, the women at the rate of 50 cents per day; in the short days of winter I paid the men at the rate of 50 cents per day, the women $37\frac{1}{2}$ cents per day, and the large boys and girls in proportion—I was led to calculate in what length of time, by labour, economy, and perseverance in well-doing, they would be enabled to purchase the remaining $5\frac{1}{2}$ days of the week, (seeing that they had a capital of their own in the one half of one day in each week, to begin to trade on,) and by that means obtain freedom for themselves and children. In this estimate and calculation I soon satisfied myself that it could be effected in the space of 14 or 15 years, at the furthest. The next consideration with me was, 'Is it my interest to assist them in its accomplishment, or can I, by any means I can devise, make it to become my interest to assist them in obtaining their freedom in that time?' This also required reflection and calculation. I went at it, and in a very short time, from the clearest of all deductions, was convinced—satisfied that it could be done, and that it was in every point of view in which the subject could be looked at and considered, my interest, (and more especially if I took into view the considerations of satisfaction, pleasantness, and happiness, which I should enjoy in tending to the happiness of others,) to do it. When thus satisfied that the project was good in itself, and worthy of trial for various solid reasons, I determined to lay my plan before them, and

explain it in all its bearings, (that is, before some ten or twelve men and women, those men and women in whom the others had confidence, and looked up to at all times and in all situations, for their superior talents, capacity, and virtues, for counsel and advice—for it is the same with the black as white man: assemble together, for the first time, twenty or fifty white men, a company of soldiers for instance, and within forty-eight hours after being brought together, [though strangers to each other,] the great majority will place their eyes on certain men among them, for their wisdom, courage, and virtue, on whom they, unknowingly to one another, determine to look up to as leaders or chiefs, to conduct, counsel, and advise them.) This I did when church service was over, on a Sabbath afternoon, observing to them, that, having their welfare and happiness in this world, as well as the next, much at heart, I was in consequence greatly desirous of serving them and their children; that, in furtherance of those views and desires, I had a plan to propose to them, which, if you have confidence in the truth and honesty of your master, of his friendship for you, and sincere desire to serve you and do you good, (for except you have that confidence in him, and mutual regard, friendship, and esteem for him, there would be no use in saying a word more about it, or in attempting to carry out the plan I have to propose to you, for I notify you before hand, it cannot succeed if the most unlimited confidence and esteem does not mutually exist, as well on the side of the master as of the servant,) and will from this day and hour change the whole course of your lives, (though I acknowledge in justice to you all, that I have no particular charge to make against the morality of your past lives,) and walk

in the love and fear of God—if you and your children will be faithful, honest, true, sober, economical, industrious, (not eye servants,) labouring day and night, considering the affairs and interest of your master, as the affairs, concerns, and interest of each and every one of you individually, and all this with a fixed determination to persevere in well-doing to the end, under every temptation that may assail you, and over every obstacle that may fall in your way, and will in everything be ruled, directed, and guided by me, I will then in that case, and under this full agreement and understanding between us, undertake so to manage your affairs, (by becoming your banker—the keeper of your gains and of your accounts,) as to insure your freedom, and that of your children, with the blessing of the Most High, (viz., your freedom in Liberia, in the land of your fathers, a great and glorious land; for let it be understood between us, it is your freedom in Liberia that I contract for, for I would never consent to give freedom to a single individual among you, to remain on the same soil with the white man,) within the term, (according to my estimate and calculation,) of fifteen or sixteen years, or thereabouts, say a year or two sooner, or a year or two later. This will be effected in conformity to my plan and estimate, in the following manner, viz., the one-half of Saturday being already your own, (in consequence of my agreement with you that no labour shall be done on the Sabbath day,) your first object will be to gain a sufficient sum of money to purchase the other half of Saturday, which is the one-eleventh part of the time you have to labour for your master, and of consequence, the one-eleventh part of the value your master has put upon you, and which you have to pay him for

your freedom, (this I notify you will be the most difficult part of your undertaking, and take the longest time to accomplish,) and is to be effected by labouring for me on Saturday afternoons, and leaving the amount of your labour in my hands, to be husbanded up for you. By foregoing everything yourselves, and drawing as little money as possible out of my hands, I calculate you will be able to accomplish it in about seven years; that once accomplished, and one whole day out of six your own, you will go on more easy and rapidly; indeed, that once effected, your success is certain; proceeding, then, on in your good work, you will be enabled easily, by your earnings on one entire day in each week, to effect the purchase of another day of your time in about four years. Now, master and owner of two days in each week, you will be able in two years more to purchase another day, so that three days, or the one-half of your time, will be your own; in one and a half years more, you will be able to purchase another day, making four days your own; in one year more, another, or the fifth day; and in six months, the last day, or the whole of your time will be your own. Your gains in less than another year will suffice to free (added to what the youths will have gained in the meantime) your children, and all will be accomplished!

In the foregoing estimate, I calculate that you will draw from me occasionally some small sums of money to furnish little necessities you may need; but you will remember when one draws, the whole of you, each individual, must draw at the same time; the men an equal sum each; the women, the three-fourth part each of the sum drawn by the men. That you shall be estimated at fair and reasonable prices—say the men at

six hundred dollars each, the women at four hundred and fifty, and the boys, girls, and children in proportion. An account shall be opened at once on my books, and your valuations charged, without taking into account the increased value of the youth and children as they advance in age, and no child to be charged who shall be born after the commencement of this agreement ; this in some measure as a counterbalance to an interest account, as none will be calculated or allowed you on the amount of your gains in my hands—that such men and women as have no children of their own, when they have worked out their prices, shall be held and obliged to work and assist in paying for the children of the others, so that the whole company shall go on the same day on board ship, and sail for your fatherland. That I expect, and shall insist on, a strict performance of your moral and religious duties in every respect, and church regularly attended by you and your children, forenoon and afternoon, on the Sabbath day. That—as I would not agree to keep an immoral or bad servant, or one who I would be obliged to have chastised for offences, on any consideration—should any of you, therefore, commit crimes at any time, whilst serving under this agreement, he or she shall be immediately put up at public sale (their offences declared or made known) and sold ; and whatever money they have earned under this agreement shall go for the benefit of the others in general. (I have now to state, that during the whole of the period in which they were labouring for themselves under this agreement, I had to sell, for conduct I could not pardon, but two individuals ; this should not be considered strange, looking at the situation in which they were placed, in the vicinage of such a city as New Orleans,

and oftentimes within its bosom for months together.) I have now to observe that their surprise and astonishment at such a proposal, (coming, as it did, from a master who had unlimited legal power over them and their time,) expecting nothing of the kind, may be easily conceived ; they gave their consent with tears of joy—declared the confidence they entertained of my truth, honesty, and pure intentions to do them and their children good, and their willingness and determination to be guided in all things by me, and to make my will and my interest (after the Divine will) the study and rule of their lives. On separating, I told them to communicate my plan and proposals to their adult fellow-servants, male and female, and to say to them that none were bound or forced to come into the arrangement who had any objection to it; that such as did not wish to accept of it should go on under the old regulations, and I requested one and all of them to consult together through the week, and to give me their final answer and determination on the next Sabbath in church, when it should be confirmed or abandoned, at the same time charging them, as they valued my affection, to keep what I said to them (desirous as I was to avoid, by so doing, the making the slaves of other plantations unhappy or discontented) in their own bosoms, and never to disclose it until after they should have left the country for Africa, to a living being on earth. (Be content, said I to them, with the good you are about to receive, and keep the knowledge of it to yourselves.) This they promised me they would do, and which, I believe, they religiously did. On the next Sabbath day I met them in church, and was told that they had informed all their fellow-servants of my views and intentions towards them—that they had well

reflected through the past week on all that I had said to them—that they were at a loss for words to express their love and gratitude to me for what I had done, and was now desirous of doing for them and their children—that they had always looked on me in the light of a father deeply interested in their welfare—that I was the only true friend they had on earth—that they accepted one and all of the proposals I had made them, and were determined, with the assistance of the Most High, to a change of life, to live and walk in the Divine law; to be guided in all their worldly conduct implicitly by my directions and counsel; and to fulfil, with all the energy of their souls, the agreement they had entered into and taken with me. On this, I observed to them, that it was all well; that the contract and agreement was now concluded; that we would on both sides, master and servants, begin from that day to execute and carry it out; that I would put down in writing all I had said to them, that no mistake might arise thereafter of what I had said, or what I had not said. That to put you, however, more fully in possession of my scheme for your benefit, to give you a more perfect understanding of it, (of the contract which you are about to take on yourselves,) so that in the carrying of it out complete success may attend it on both sides—that neither party, master nor slave, may be disappointed, I will inform you what I expect to realize, and how it is to be effected. *My object is your freedom and happiness in Liberia, without loss or the cost of a cent to myself from sending you away, and conferring that boon (as the humble instrument of the Most High) on you and your children.* How, you will naturally inquire, is that to be done? I will tell you how it is to be done. There is but

one way, one mode to effect it, that I can see or devise, and that is by greater assiduity and exertions in the slave to his labour during the usual hours of day labour, and especially by extra hours of labour before day in the morning, and after night in the evening. One hour after night in the evening, and one hour before day in the morning, would be two hours extra in twenty-four hours, which would be the one-sixth part more of time devoted to labour than is generally demanded of the slave, which is equivalent to two years and a half additional labour in fifteen years. Two hours extra labour before day in the morning, and two hours after night in the evening, would be four hours extra in every twenty-four hours or day, which would be the one-third part more of time devoted to labour than is generally demanded of the slave, which is equivalent to five entire years of additional and extra labour in fifteen years. Without a scheme of this kind, said I to them, by means of which you can effect a greater amount of labour in a given time that you otherwise could do, I could not afford to send you out; for, without it, my sending you to Liberia would, (under the agreement, and in the mode I propose, of permitting you to gain your freedom by labouring during the hours and time which belongs to your master, and by that means paying him for your time,) though it appear specious in itself, be, in reality the making you a present of your time—the making you and your children a gift of your freedom; for as the whole of your time belongs to your master, (the Sabbath day excepted, on which holy day neither master nor servant is permitted to labour,) if he was to permit you to work on a certain part of it to make money to purchase your freedom, he would, in reality, in so doing

make you a gift of your freedom, which few masters could afford to do. But in the mode which I propose and now explain to you, that you may fully comprehend and understand it, (which is the contract and agreement you are now making, and taking on yourselves to perform,) your master will not make you a present of an hour of your time, and you, in reality, will have gained and placed in his hands, previous to the going out free, a sum of money arising from your extra labour fully sufficient to enable him to purchase an equal number of people with yourselves, man for man, woman for woman, and youth and child for youth and child, to take place in the work of his farm, so that his work and revenue shall not be stopped or arrested for an hour, and to set you out with all things necessary in your new life and new undertaking, (should he think proper so to do,) much to your own advantage, respectability, and happiness, and to his own satisfaction and honour; for a humane master will delight in tending to the happiness of those whom the Most High has placed under his care, and who have served him truly and faithfully. The only difference and change, then, which this arrangement will make in the affairs of your master, will be that he will have the same number of new servants in the place and stead of his old and faithful ones, to do his work. You therefore now see, and fully understand, what my scheme for your benefit is. It is feasible, and can be easily accomplished, while it will tend at the same time to the happiness of your lives while carrying it out and putting it into execution. I repeat to you again, said I to them, that my plan is based on extra labour, that you must consider none (day or night) too great for you to perform, remembering at the same time that

it is not to be accomplished in a day, but will require years of perseverance in well doing to effect it. On my part, you may depend on my prudence, not to involve myself by speculation or otherwise, (with the Divine blessing,) so as to put it out of my power to carry out the agreement; and I will take care by keeping regular accounts of all your gains, and by instructions to my executors, in my last will and testament, (should it please Him, in whose hands all things are, to take me from life before the full accomplishment of the scheme,) to have our agreement truly and fully executed, and justice rendered you, by selling you out as servants for a time, and then, (after the expiration of your term of service,) seeing that you and your children are sent out to Liberia. To all this, they (the whole of the adults, men and women,) no youth or child was present, lent an attentive ear; and again, with eyes streaming with tears, assured me of their full determination to devote their days and nights to the honour of God, the happiness of their children, and the carrying out the plan I had devised for their benefit. It now remains for me to state the results of the experiment. In less than six years the first half day was gained and paid for by them. In about four years, the next, or second day of the week, was paid for and their own. In about two and a quarter years, the next, or third day, was paid for and made their own. In about fifteen months, the next, or fourth day, was theirs. In about a year, the next, or fifth day, was gained and paid for; and in about six months, the last or sixth day of the week, became their own, and completed the purchase—effecting their freedom in about fourteen and a half years. After this,

it took them somewhere about five months to labour to pay the balance due on their children, added to what the youths (boys and girls) had earned. If there appears any discrepancy in the period in which they effected the purchase of the different days for themselves, it is to be accounted for in their drawing more money at one period than at another, as they frequently did towards the last, after they had accomplished the purchase of two or three days, or their freedom would have been sooner accomplished. This took place (the effecting of their freedom) in August, 1840, nearly two years since; at which time they would have taken their departure for Liberia, but as the Abolitionists of the Northern and Eastern States of our Union had occasioned much excitement in our State, not only among the owners of slaves, but among the slaves themselves, I did not consider it safe, or myself at liberty, (however-somuch I desired it) as there was a considerable black population in the immediate neighbourhood of those my black people, to send them away. I therefore told them, (without giving them the cause,) that they must be satisfied to remain where they were until the proper time for their departure should arrive, with which they remained satisfied. So that they effected their freedom, as above stated, in about fourteen years and a half; and the assertion I made in your Gazette of the 24th of June last, 'that the act of sending those people away is, in my case, one of simple honesty alone,' is explained in my having received in money from them, (or the equivalent of money,) the full price agreed on between us, for their freedom in Liberia. Some persons, Messrs. Editors, may now, perhaps, be disposed to say, why proceed in this roundabout way, this giving the

one-half of Saturday, this keeping of accounts, this purchasing of day after day, &c. &c.—it is all unnecessary, and their working to gain their time an illusion—that the whole of the time of the slave belongs to and is the time of the master—that the master can compel his labour, without freeing his slave, &c. I admit the truth of the latter part of the assertion, that the time and labour of the slave belongs of right to the master, but deny that the first is illusory, as respects either one or the other, the master or his slave; for it is founded in the moral constitution of man. Without hope, ~~a~~ certain something in the future for him to look forward and aspire to, man would be nothing. Deprive him of that inspiriting faculty of soul, and he would grovel in the dust as the brute. But, say they, why not promise him at once, freedom after fifteen year's service? To this I have many and strong objections. In that mode his freedom would appear the gift of his master, who might repent and retract (as the slave would fear) of his promise. In the other mode, the slave would have gained it—have purchased and paid his master for it. Hope would be kept alive in his bosom—he would have a goal in view, continually urging him on to faithfulness, fidelity, truth, industry, economy, and every virtue and good work. The observations of a great and good man, (with whom I was in correspondence,) made to me in one of his letters some years since, to whom I had faintly intimated the plan I was pursuing with my people, are so descriptive of their then situation, feeling, and conduct, that I will give an extract from it. ‘Your plan, dear Sir, as I infer from what you have intimated to me, calls into action a higher and nobler motive than servile fear. It holds

out a reward to the obedient and faithful. Such a motive can seldom fail. It is the impulsive cause of all good conduct; hence we find it holding a conspicuous place in that system of government which the Almighty exercised over the ancient Israelites; 'If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land.' And the same motive to Christian conduct, is presented under the Christian dispensation; 'Be thou faithful until death, and I will give thee a crown of life.' From the foregoing summary it will be seen that the basis of my plan for their success and government, was RELIGION—a desire to awaken in their bosoms the love of the Divinity. Hope and trust in Him, once born in their souls, would produce its fruit—a determination to obedience, labour, order, economy, and all good works. That such was the result, and was the impulsive cause of their true and faithful conduct, is shown. Its effects on the interest of their master, his happiness, and their own happiness, is also seen and shown. They have now sailed for Liberia, the land of their fathers; and I can say, with truth and heartfelt satisfaction, that a more virtuous people do not exist in any community; and I pray the Most High to continue unto them the blessings which he never ceased to shower down on their heads whilst under my roof.

I will further observe, that from the day on which I made the agreement with them, (notwithstanding they had, at all times previous thereto, been a well-disposed and orderly people,) an entire change appeared to come over them; they were no longer apparently the same people; a sedateness, a care, an economy, an industry, took possession of them, to which there seemed to be no bounds, but in their physical strength. They were

never tired of labouring, and seemed as though they could never effect enough. They became temperate, moral, religious, setting an example of innocent and unoffending lives to the world around them, which was seen and admired by all. The result of my experiment, in a pecuniary point of view, as relates to myself, is not one of the least surprising of its features, and is this, that in the space of about sixteen years, which those people served me, since making the agreement with them, they have gained for me, in addition to having performed more and better labour than slaves ordinarily perform in the usual time of labouring, a sum of money, (including the sum they appear to have paid me in the purchase of their time,) which will enable me to go to Virginia or Carolina, and purchase a gang of people of nearly double the number of those I have sent away. This I state from an account kept by me, showing the amount and nature of their extra work and labour, which I am ready to attest to, in the most solemn manner, at any time.

Previous to entering into the agreement with those people, I calculated (and my estimate and calculation have been fully realized, and more than realized to me in the result) that their labour would be given with all the energy of heart, soul, and physical powers; that they would, in consequence, accomplish more labour in a given time than the same number of people would in ordinary circumstances; and that, in addition, they would labour some two, three, or four hours, morning and night, in the twenty-four hours of the day, more than other slaves were in the habit of doing, or would do. To set forth and show the spirit that actuated and filled their souls (in relation to their worldly concerns) during the whole

time they were operating under this agreement, I will state in the sequel to this—some circumstances known here to hundreds of our most respectable citizens.

If the planters of Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas, whose lands are worn out, would entrust their slaves to the younger male branches of their families, to bring here into our State, to cultivate the richest alluvial soils in the world, they would be enabled, (under such an agreement with their slaves as I have pointed out above,) every fifteen years, (after gaining by their extra labour, the value of their entire gangs, making large revenues, and passing happy lives; for I can say with great truth, that the last sixteen years of mine, passed as they have been in peace and without anxiety, in the midst of those people, have been among the most happy of my life; for the very knowledge that I was surrounded by those who looked upon me in the light of a friend and a father, and who would willingly at any time have perilled their own lives to have saved mine, if necessary, gave peace and serenity to the mind,) to send their entire gangs to Liberia without the cost of a dollar to themselves. Besides which, to bring their slaves into this State, and keep them here fifteen years, would be an act of humanity, as it would inure them to a climate very analogous to that of Africa, and they would run no risk to their health or lives when afterwards settling in Liberia. I will now state that, to carry out this plan with complete success, it is all-important that the slave has full and entire confidence in his master; he must know and be convinced that his master is his friend and well-wisher; that he is true, sincere, and honest: without this confidence of the slave in his master, I at once confess the plan could not be carried

out with success. It would be in vain for a master to attempt it whose character was known for duplicity, untruth, dishonesty, cruelty, &c. &c.; he would not succeed in it, for no one is better acquainted with the character of the master than the slave himself. To insure the success of the plan in all its parts, I will say also to such masters as feel an interest in the happiness of their black people, and will attempt to execute and carry it out, neglect not religious instruction to your people, for religion must be combined with the plan, and walk hand in hand with it. To encourage them in the execution and carrying out of their engagement, I showed them every six months, or twice a year, their accounts on my books, and informed them of its state, their success, and the sum of money they had gained, and which was in my hands, standing to the credit of their accounts. This proceeding on my part appeared to instil, as it were, new life into them, to afford them great satisfaction; it was a proof also to them of the interest I took and felt in their affairs. The legislatures of our different slave States might, by the enactment of laws on the subject, greatly assist and protect the interest of the slave. (I do not mean by forcing the master to make such arrangements, or to come to such an understanding with their slaves;) but in the event of misfortune or bankruptcy in the master or mistress, whose slaves had been working under such an arrangement made with them, that the master or mistress might be permitted to prove, on his or her oath, in a court of justice, that such an agreement existed between him, or her, and their slaves; and that they (the slaves) had been working under said agreement for such or such a length of time; that such a sum of money had been gained by them towards their

freedom, &c. &c. By which means the slaves (if seized for debt) could only be sold for a certain time (of sufficient duration, after a legal estimation) for the liquidating the balance due from them (the slaves) on themselves; well understood that such enactments should be made by the different legislatures, under the express condition that the slaves were not to remain in the United States, but to remove, or to be removed, to Liberia, in Africa, so soon as the time of service, for which they were sold, should have expired. If, on the other hand, the master or mistress of slaves, who had of their own free will entered into such an agreement with their slaves, should die previous to the slaves having acquired the right to emigrate to Liberia, under the agreement they had made to labour for their freedom, the slaves should be protected by law, and permitted to prove in a court of justice, by one or more disinterested white witnesses, (who had heard it from the mouth of the master or mistress of the slaves,) the amount they had already gained under the agreement, and they should then be sold as servants for time, to pay the balance due from them, the said slaves, and then forced to emigrate to Liberia.

I will now say a few words relative to my general mode of treating those people. They were lodged in warm and comfortable houses, fed with good salt provisions and corn bread, with a plenty of garden vegetables cooked with pork, clothed with durable clothing according to the season; a ration of molasses and one of salt was allowed them weekly, and a little coffee and common tea every six months; Christmas and New-Year's presents served to supply their little wants, and enable them to leave nearly everything arising from

their own labour untouched in my hands. They kept hogs and fowls of their own, and cultivated what ground they needed in corn and vegetables. In sickness, I had as good care taken of them as of myself, with good nurses to attend them. When they committed or were charged with offences, I did not order an arbitrary punishment, but had them tried by their peers. I would summon a jury of five or six of the principal men, say to them such a man or such a woman is charged with such or such an offence, the witnesses I am told are such and such persons—summon them, hold your court, have him tried, and report to me your judgment and punishment to be inflicted. It was done all in due form (the court-room was the church); the trial took place, and the person acquitted or condemned; the punishment awarded (if condemned and found guilty) was reported to me, and I generally found it necessary to modify it in reference to leniency. If twenty lashes was awarded, I would say to the judges, who were the executors of the sentence, give ten lashes, and a moral lecture to the culprit, for the offence. It was done, the criminal acknowledged the justice of the punishment, promised better things for the future, and forgot not to be grateful to the master who had reduced the degree of punishment, and reinstated him in place and favour.

For upwards of twenty years I have had no white man over them as an overseer; one of themselves was their manager or commander, who conducted, directed, and managed the others; nor would I myself have the time once in six months to see in person what they were doing, though the commander would report to me nightly what he had done through the day, and receive my instructions for the day following. They were be-

sides my men of business, enjoyed my confidence, were my clerks, transacted all my affairs, made purchases of materials, collected my rents, leased my houses, took care of my property and effects of every kind, and that with honesty and fidelity, which was a proof against every temptation. As I promised to state in the sequel some circumstances that would go to show the spirit that animated and filled their souls, in executing and carrying out the agreement they had entered into with their master, and in what extra labour I have spoken of was performed by them, I have now to observe, that I have been looked on generally by the French planters, on the opposite side of the river to New Orleans, (where I reside,) as if not a very cruel, at least a very severe master, one who works his people late and early, (for the whip was seldom or ever heard on my plantation—never, indeed, except to uphold and support good order and morality.) Some years since, a gentleman from one of the Eastern States, a friend of mine, met me in the street of New Orleans on a Monday, and on stopping me, began to smile, saying that he had passed the day previous (the Sabbath) in the country, a few leagues above my residence, on the right bank of the Mississippi, at the house of a rich sugar planter, who had given a party in honour of his arrival, and where he had met at dinner some twenty or thirty French gentlemen (principally sugar planters of that side of the river) and their ladies; that at dinner the conversation turned on planting, crops, slavery, &c. &c., and he was asked what was generally thought by the inhabitants of the Eastern and Northern States, of the inhabitants of the South of the Union, the slaveholders. The gentleman replied, among other observations, that the French planters of Louisiana were looked upon

generally by the Americans of the north as very severe, and even cruel masters, in the treatment of their slaves, much more so even than the planters of Louisiana of English ancestry. This brought from the gentlemen at table an assertion that some of the most severe masters of the State were to be found among the Anglo-Americans, (a term by which all Americans and strangers generally are called by the natives of Louisiana of French descent,) and, as an instance, they cited you, mentioning your name as one who obliged his people to work until midnight, and one and two o'clock in the morning, and for the truth of the assertion they appealed to one another, when it was confirmed by them generally, both ladies and gentlemen, that they had known your black people often and often to have been at work (as they had seen them with their own eyes) until that late hour of the night and morning, adding, that it was known to be a common thing with them to work late and early. The gentleman observed to the company, as he informed me, that the circumstance surprised and astonished him much—knowing me as he did, he had not supposed me capable of treating my people with such severity, &c. &c.—they again assured him of the fact, and appealed to every inhabitant of the country between that and my residence, for its truth.—Now, says my friend, the gentleman in question to me, I merely mention those things to you—I do not inquire as to the truth of it, because I am convinced there is some mistake about it, something about it I do not understand. To this I observed, smiling, Not so fast, my friend—all that those ladies and gentlemen asserted, is true, and they had seen, as they informed you, with their own eyes, my people at work, often and often, at the

hours they mentioned to you, but did they tell you at the same time, that they never saw them at work, but they were as merry as crickets, singing and joyful, making the whole neighbourhood vocal with their happiness; because had they told you that, which would have been nothing but the truth, it would no doubt have convinced you, that there was no compulsion in their labouring. The only part of assertion of those ladies and gentlemen which was incorrect, was that wherein they observed, that I obliged my slaves to work until midnight, and one and two o'clock in the morning. They are often working, I confess, until these hours; but I do not force them to work—it is of their own free will and accord. Then, observed the gentleman, you must pay them, I presume. I do not say, said I to him, what I do, further than that there is no compulsion in their labouring; but I promise, that you shall know the story one day, if I am spared, (which he will, as I shall send him a copy of this.) We then separated, but I found the gentleman, I confess, very incredulous, (notwithstanding he knew something of my character,) as to slaves working of their own accord, without compulsion from their master. The story is this; my residence is on the opposite side of the river Mississippi, immediately in front of the city of New Orleans; the steam ferry, which runs from one side of the river to the other, lands a short distance below my house. The French ladies and gentlemen residing above my house, on the right bank of the river, being very fond of balls and theatres, were in consequence, in the constant habit of passing and re-passing my house, to and from the city of New Orleans in their carriages, at all hours of the night and morning. Immediately below, and adjoining my residence, I had

extensive establishments for the making of brick, engaged in working in which, those ladies and gentlemen saw, with their own eyes, often my people, at the hours they mentioned, which explains why they considered me a severe master. I have to observe, that I was in the habit of never retiring to rest at night, until seeing my commander, and knowing that my people had come in from their work, (for I have laboured myself day and night, through a long life, and shall still continue so to do, to its close,) and often and often, when the clock would strike ten and eleven, I would say to a servant of the house, (not having seen the commander,) Have the people come in from their work? And he would reply, No, sir, I see bonfires in the brick-yard, they have not yet finished their work. I would then say to him, Go out and ask the commander what keeps him out so late? when he would return to me, saying—Sir, the commander says there is some thirty or forty thousand bricks out, the weather looks like rain, and he must get them in to save them, or they will be lost. Satisfied with this statement, I have waited until midnight, and sent out again; the same answer returned; again, at one o'clock in the morning; same answer; they singing the whole time, that they might be heard over the neighbourhood. At two o'clock I have sent out to him with positive orders to break off work, and bring his people in, even if the bricks should be lost—that I would not permit them to work any longer. When in would come the commander, (and likely not at all pleased,) saying, Sir, if you had let us go on an hour or two longer, we should have saved all our brick, which I fear we shall lose. When I have had to console him by telling him, you cannot work all night—it is very

late now—the people must have rest. This will serve to show how the spirit worked within them; and after retiring to bed and rest, I have known them hundreds of times, on an appearance of rain, to arise and go out to work at all hours of the night and morning. I will now give another instance, (I could relate hundreds,) going to show the effect of that hope, that charm of man's existence, 'liberty,' on the life and actions of those people. Some years since, some twenty or thirty of those people were engaged in erecting some extensive brick warehouses on Julia-street, in New Orleans, (for they were excellent mechanics of various trades, and were in the habit of making brick, purchasing shells and burning lime, sawing timber, and then taking the materials when made, and building them up into fine houses on both sides of the river, for their master,) near to the residence of Edward E. Parker, Esq., one of our most wealthy and respectable citizens, a gentleman who was in the habit of building very extensively himself in the city. Meeting Mr. Parker on a certain day in the street of New Orleans, I was accosted, and asked whether I would sell him a certain black man, named Jim or James, (having several men of that name, I inquired which James,) when he observed, the one who was at the head of the bricklayers, who were erecting those warehouses on Julia-street, near to his, Mr. Parker's residence. I replied to him, no; that I was not in the habit of selling people; that I purchased occasionally but never sold. Mr. Parker then observed, that he wished I would depart in the present instance from my general rule and agree to sell him that man; that he was very desirous of possessing him; that as he was erecting several buildings, the man would suit him, and that he

would give a good price for him. I again said to him that the man was not for sale, and was about to leave him, when he observed, Could you not be tempted, sir, to sell him? I will give you 2500 dollars for him, in cash. I told Mr. Parker it did not tempt me, and we separated. A week or two thereafter, I met Mr. Parker again, and was again accosted on the same subject, with Do, Mr. M'Donogh, sell me that man; I will give you 3000 dollars for him. Again I made him the same answer, that he was not for sale. Again and again we met in the streets, and each time the same request, by raising the offer of price at each interview, until at last, Mr. Parker informed me that he would pay me 5000 dollars in cash for him. Feeling at length a little vexed at these repeated demands, I said to Mr. Parker, though you are a very rich man, sir, your whole fortune could not purchase that man, (not that he is worth it, or worth more than any other man,) or any of the others; but because he is not to be sold. Mr. Parker, finding at length, from the refusal of such a large sum of money for him, that there was no hopes of obtaining him, observed to me, Well, then, Mr. M'Donogh, seeing now that you will not sell him at any price, tell me what kind of people are those of yours? To which I replied, How so, Mr. Parker, I suppose they are like other men; flesh and blood, like you and myself; when he replied, Why, sir, I have never seen such people; building as they are next door to my residence, I see, and have my eye on them from morning till night. You are never there, for I have never met you, or seen you once at the building; tell me, sir, said he, where do those people of yours live; do they cross the river morning and night?

I informed him that they lived on the opposite side of the river, where I live myself, and crossed it to their work, when working in New Orleans, night and morning, except when stormy, (which happened very seldom,) when I did not permit them to cross it, to endanger their lives: at such time they remained at home, or in the city. Why, sir, said he, I am an early riser, getting up before day; and do you think that I am not awoke every morning of my life by the noise of 'their trowels at work, and their singing and noise, before day; and do you suppose, sir, that they stop or leave off work at sun-down? no, sir; but they work as long as they can see to lay brick, and then carry up brick and mortar, for an hour or two afterwards, to be a-head of their work the next morning. And again, sir, do you think they walk at their work? no, sir; they run all day. You see, sir, said he, those immensely long ladders, five stories in height; do you suppose they walk up them? no, sir; they run up and down them like monkeys, the whole day long. I never saw such people as those, sir; I do not know what to make of them; was there a white man over them with a whip in his hand all day, why then I should see and understand the cause of their running, and incessant labour; but I cannot comprehend it, sir; there is something in it, sir—there is something in it. Great man, sir, that Jim—great man, sir—should like to own him, sir, should like to own him. After having laughed very heartily, at the observations of Mr. Parker, for it was all truth, every word of it, I informed him that there was a secret about it, which I would disclose to him some day, and we separated. Now, Mr. Parker imputed the conduct of these people (for I have given

the very words and expressions he used, and he is alive, hearty and well, in New Orleans, and can be spoken to by any one interested in the subject) to the head man who conducted them, and in consequence, impressed with that belief, offered me 5000 dollars for him; but Mr. Parker knew not the stimulus that acted on the heart of each, and every one of them; that it was the whole body of them that moved together as one mind; not one alone, the head man, as he supposed. In closing this statement, I will say a few words to show what the attachment of people similarly situated (slaves) will be to a master who treats them justly. The ship on which they sailed for Africa, laid opposite my house, in the Mississippi, at the bank of the river; I had taken my leave of them on going on board the ship, on Friday evening, the day previous to her sailing, in my house. The scene which then took place I will not attempt to describe—it can never be erased from my memory. Though standing in need, on the occasion, of consolation myself, (in bidding a last farewell on earth, to those who had so many claims on my affection, and who had been round and about me for such a long series of years,) I had to administer it to them, who stood in the greater need of it. To tell them that the separation was but a brief period of time—that we should meet again, I trusted, in a better and happier state—to charge them to gird up their loins, and play the man valiantly, in their determination to enter into their own Canaan, and to remember that there was still another and final separation from all things earthly, which they had to sustain and encounter—to meet, and be prepared for which, they must persevere in well-doing to the end—that their

lamps must be kept well trimmed, and their lights burning. On Saturday morning the Rev. Mr. McLain, the agent of the American Colonization Society, (who took a deep interest in all that concerned this people,) crossed the river to despatch the ship, and see them take their departure, which took place about 8 o'clock in the morning of that day, the 11th of June. After seeing them off, (the ship was taken by a steamer,) Mr. McLain came into my house, as I was expecting him to breakfast, and on seeing him much affected in his manner, a tear standing in his eye, I inquired if anything had taken place to give him pain; to which he replied, 'Oh, sir, it was an affecting sight to see them depart. They were all on the deck of the ship, and your servants who have not gone were on the shore bidding them farewell, when from every tongue on board the ship, I heard the charge to those on shore, Fanny, take care of our master; James, take care of our master; take care of our master, as you love us, and hope to meet us in heaven, take care of our beloved master; which ejaculations,' said he, 'continued until they were out of hearing.' This would appear to reverse the general course of things. It is the master or mistress who is heard, when about to make a voyage, recommending their servants to the care of some confidential person; but here were the servants recommending their master to the care of other servants.

I have now, gentlemen editors, fulfilled my promise, and related the experience I have had in the management of slaves; should it induce but one planter in the State to try the mode I pursued, so much to my own satisfaction and pecuniary advantage, and meet with the same

success which has attended my attempt, I shall consider the time it has cost in giving the relation, well spent, and myself fully repaid.

With great respect, I am, gentlemen,

Your friend and obedient servant,

JOHN M'DONOGH.

M'Donogh, opposite New Orleans,

July 10th, 1842.

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